

BLACKIE'S JUNIOR SCHOOL SHAKESPEARE

HAMLET

PRINCE OF DENMARK


EDITED BY

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The Junior School Shakespeare is an attempt to provide a edition of the best plays which will meet the needs of the youngest students of the dramatist. All the plays in the series are edited on the same general plan, which presents some novel features. Its characteristics may be stated thus: The *Text* has in every case been prepared with great care. All passages that it might be thought undesirable to read in class have been omitted.

In the *Introduction*, while all necessary information is furnished concerning the origin and date of the play, and other such externalia, it has been considered equally important to discuss, in simple and familiar language, the literary qualities of the play, and its characters.

The aim of the *Notes* is to explain briefly and clearly all unfamiliar words and allusions, and to point out some of the differences between Elizabethan and Present English without excess of philological material. Additional features are: that a free paraphrase is given wherever a verbal explanation would be insufficient; that parallel passages and references to other authors are very sparingly employed; and that there are hints towards the interpretation of character and motive, and towards the appreciation of the play as an actual work of stagecraft.

The *Classified Index* gathers up and tabulates the notabilia of the play, supplying full references to the notes bearing on them, and is intended to assist the student in obtaining a thorough grip of his work.

It is believed that this edition will be found particularly suited to junior candidates in the University Local and similar examinations, the editors of the several volumes being teachers who have practical experience of their needs.

The series will also be found suitable as annotated reading books in the upper classes of those elementary schools in which Shakespeare is read.

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INTRODUCTION

I. THE DATE OF THE PLAY.

THE date of a play is important for two reasons, and can be fixed in two ways.

I. The importance of it lies in the fact that it enables us

(1) To compare the play with other plays written by the same author, and to put it into its right place;

(2) To estimate the precise influences and circumstances under which the play was written.

There is often, however, considerable difficulty in fixing the date of any particular play; and such difficulty is generally due to the fact that the earliest evidence of the existence of an *old* play is usually its being *printed*, though many plays were *written* long before they were printed. For instance, more than half Shakespeare's plays were not printed at all during his lifetime. The reason for this was that Shakespeare was an actor as well as an author; and, if his plays were once printed, other theatrical companies might act them without obtaining his permission or paying him any fees, and the public might be tempted to read a play instead of going to see it acted.

II. The method of fixing the date of a play is to collect and compare two kinds of evidence:—

(1) *External evidence*, e.g. contemporary records of the actual writing or performing of the play,—allusions to or quotations from the play by other authors,—historical events which might have suggested certain scenes and passages.

(2) *Internal evidence*, e.g. the general style,—allusions to or quotations from the works of other authors,—direct reference to contemporary events.

With regard to Shakespeare's *style*, it may be laid down as a general rule that his early plays are full of classical allusions, puns, rimes, and disjointed lines; his later plays contain fewer classical allusions, fewer puns, fewer rimes, and the sense runs on much more freely from line to line.

The External Evidence of the date of *Hamlet* is both positive and negative.

- { (1) It was *registered* at the Stationers' Hall in 1602.
- { (2) A *printed* edition actually appeared in 1603.
- (3) It is *not* mentioned in the list of Shakespeare's plays given by Francis Meres in 1598.

The Internal Evidence also points to a late period in Shakespeare's life:—

(1) The *Style* is very mature. For instance, there are few classic allusions (cf. i. 2. 140, 149; i. 4. 83; i. 5. 33, &c.), few puns (cf. 2. 67; ii. 2. 179, &c.), except where Hamlet is intentionally talking nonsense to Polonius,—and few rimes, except at the end of scene (cf. note on ii. 2. 578); and the blank verse runs on with the greatest freedom from line to line (cf. almost any long speech of Hamlet's).

(2) The *Subject* is far removed from the historical themes of his early years and from the playful comedy of his middle life, and goes naturally with that of *King Lear* (c. 1604), *Othello* (c. 1604), and *Macbeth* (c. 1606).

(3) The *Inhibition* mentioned in ii. 2. 317 refers either to the years 1600–1601 or to the years 1603–1604. Cf. note on the passage, and remarks below on James VI.

2. THE SOURCES OF THE PLOT.

It was evidently a common occurrence in Shakespeare's time for an actor to become an author, and to make very free use of any existing manuscripts or books with which he was acquainted. For instance, in 1204, Saxo Grammaticus, a native of Elsinore, wrote a *Historia Danica*, which was printed in 1514. From this a Frenchman called Francis de Belleforest, borrowed the 'Legend of Amleth' for his *Histoires Tragiques*; and from the latter the Legend was again borrowed by an unknown English writer for his novel *The Historie of Hamblett*. There was obviously no reason why Shakespeare should not make a similar use of existing works, though, as a matter of fact, he seems never to have simply copied. Moreover, we have abundant proof that he was a very earnest and diligent student; and, as such, he must have read much more widely than the majority of his contemporaries. At the same time, he evidently preferred to take his plots from stories that were sure to be familiar to his audience. For instance, all his earliest plays were 'historical', which shows also that he had no taste for sensationalism.

Now, besides the novel above-mentioned, there was also in existence before 1587 a play on this 'Legend of Amleth'; and thus the story would be sufficiently well known to suit Shakespeare's purpose. At all events, he borrowed the legend for this great tragedy of *Hamlet*; but he completely transformed it in the borrowing, especially for the second edition of his play, which appeared in 1604. Not only does he represent the Danes as Christians, with customs and ideals like those of the Elizabethan English; but he also, in the second edition, throws the character of Hamlet into marked prominence, chiefly by putting into his mouth 'monologues' on the most pressing problems of human life at the time. He was probably induced to do this partly by a study of Montaigne's 'Essays', the English translation of which appeared in 1603, and partly by the political importance of that 'wisest fool in Christendom', James VI. of Scotland. He certainly possessed a copy of 'The Essays'; and there are, obviously, references in the play to the family relations and circumstances of James.

3. THE SCENE.

The Scene is laid at Elsinore, or Helsingør, on the east coast of Zealand, about twenty-four miles from Copenhagen. On a neighbouring point there had been built in 1577 the Castle of Kronborg; and it is at this castle that the play opens. Most of the scenes are 'Rooms in the Castle'; but two very important scenes are on the 'Platform before the Castle', and in the Fifth Act there is the famous scene in 'the Churchyard'. Two scenes are in 'Polonius' house', and one is on 'a Plain in Denmark'.

4. THE STORY.

ACT I.—*Hamlet*, Prince of Denmark, although thirty years of age, was still studying philosophy in the University of Wittenberg when he heard of the sudden death of his father. He at once hastened home, only to find that his mother (*Gertrude*) had already married again, and actually married her dead husband's brother (*Claudius*). Indeed, the marriage followed the funeral so closely that according to Hamlet (i. 2. 130),—

"The funeral baked-meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables"

This marriage was intensely disliked by every one, for it had been

celebrated with most unseemly haste, and the dead king, compared with Claudius, was as "Hyperion to a satyr" (i. 2. 140); and suspicions arose that Claudius had murdered his brother, partly for the sake of Gertrude and partly for the sake of the Danish throne, to which Hamlet was probably the lawful heir (v. 2. 65).

Hamlet had been deeply attached to his father, and showed his grief in dress and demeanour in spite of his mother's remonstrances. What troubled him most, however, was the uncertainty about his father's death. Claudius had given out that he had been stung by a serpent; but Hamlet's "prophetic soul" had grasped the truth (i. 2. 256; i. 5. 41).

While he was in this state of terrible uncertainty, he was visited by his bosom friend, *Horatio*, and two other soldiers, *Marcellus* and *Bernardo*, who told him that the ghost of the dead king had appeared for three nights in succession on the platform before the castle,—that it did not answer even when addressed by *Horatio*,—and that it vanished the moment the cock crew (i. 2. 195, &c.).

Convinced that this apparition betokened "some foul play", Hamlet took the next watch himself, along with *Horatio* and *Marcellus*. The ghost again appeared, and beckoned Hamlet apart. *Horatio* implored him not to go, for fear it was only an evil spirit tempting him on to his destruction (i. 4. 69); but Hamlet vowed that he did not set his life "at a pin's fee", and that he would "make a ghost" of any one who tried to stop him.

In the subsequent interview (i. 5.) the ghost told Hamlet all the story of the murder, adjuring him by his love towards his mother

"Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder",

but, in doing so, not to contrive aught against his mother—"to leave her to heaven".

All this Hamlet swore that he would faithfully perform; and, after confiding in his two friends and pledging them to the strictest secrecy, he hinted to them that he was going to

"put an antic disposition on",

i.e. pretend to be mad. This would allay any possible suspicions on the part of his uncle, and thus enable him to mature his plans for vengeance. To this one purpose, henceforth, he swore to devote his life, sacrificing for it even his love for *Ophelia*, the only daughter of a time-serving old proverb-monger, *Polonius*; and this course was made easier for him by the fact that she had been warned in the

INTRODUCTION.

meantime both by her father and by her brother, *Laertes*, to avoid Hamlet (i. 3.), and to lay no store by all his letters and presents, by the many tenders of his affection, or by the honourable fashion in which he had importuned her with love.

ACT II.—So well did Hamlet counterfeit madness that both the king and the queen were more or less deceived; but, having some suspicion of the cause of the madness, they sent for two courtiers, *Rosencrantz* and *Guildestern*, whom they commissioned to at once cheer and spy on their "too much changed son" (ii. 2. 1-39). Polonius, however, assured the king that Hamlet's madness was caused by unrequited love—his love for Ophelia; and, in proof of his assertion, he produced a wild letter which Hamlet had sent to her, and which she had passed on—apparently, without any hesitation—to her father (ii. 2. 110).

In the meantime there came to court a certain theatrical company in which Hamlet had formerly taken great interest; and the idea occurred to him of having a performance—before the king—of something very like the murder of his father. By this means he intended to "catch the conscience of the king", and to remove from his own mind a fear that the ghost was only an evil spirit masquerading as his father for the express purpose of tempting him into crime.

ACT III.—This plan he carried out to the letter, even inserting in the play a passage which he had written—in accordance with the ghost's story—specially to test Claudius; and the result utterly confirmed his worst suspicions. For, when the players came to 'a poisoning scene in a garden', the conscience-stricken king sprang up, called for lights, and abruptly left the theatre (iii. 2. 239).

Convinced by this of his uncle's guilt, Hamlet was thinking over the means of taking vengeance on him when he was summoned to a private interview with the queen. On his way to her he had an opportunity of killing the king, but failed to take it. [This was a fatal mistake, involving the deaths of Ophelia, Polonius, *Laertes*, Gertrude, *Rosencrantz*, and *Guildestern*; and the reasons given by Hamlet (iii. 3. 73) for his delay seem to be only excuses.]

It was at her husband's orders that the queen had sent the summons, with a view to rebuking Hamlet for his unfilial conduct; and, as the king suspected that her motherly love might cause her to give an incomplete or prejudiced account of the interview, he told Polonius to hide behind the curtains in the queen's room, where he could overhear all that passed between the mother and son (iii. 3. 28, &c.).

In the interview Hamlet bitterly reproached her with her con-

duct; and he became so vehement in his language that she, believing all the time that he was mad, began to fear he would do her some bodily injury, and cried out for help. Her cry was at once repeated from behind the curtains; and Hamlet, mistaking Polonius' voice for the king's, ran his sword through the curtains at the place from which the voice had seemed to come (iii. 4. 24).

ACT IV.—The death of Polonius gave the king an excuse for banishing Hamlet from Denmark. Indeed, if he had dared, he would have put him to death openly. As he dared not do that, he shipped him away to England in the company of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, by whom also he sent letters to the English sovereign ordering him to put Hamlet to death (iv. 3.).

[Hamlet, however, suspected some treachery, and got temporary possession of the letters by night. Then, having erased his own name and inserted instead the names of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, he returned the letters to the place from which he had abstracted them (v. 2. 1-60).]

On the way the ship was attacked by pirates; and, as Hamlet was leading a boarding-column on to the pirate vessel, he was suddenly deserted by his companions and taken prisoner by the pirates. The latter, however, partly out of admiration for his courage, partly out of disgust at the treachery of the others, and partly in hope of reward from such an important person as the heir-apparent to the Danish throne, landed him at the nearest Danish port (iv. 6.).

Meanwhile, the shock of her father's death, and the fact that it had been caused by the prince whom she loved, had proved too much for Ophelia's naturally feeble brain; it gave way under the strain, and she drowned herself. Then this double calamity was used by the king to stir up her brother, Laertes, to kill Hamlet as the cause of it all (iv. 7.).

ACT V.—Accordingly, Laertes, after quarrelling violently with Hamlet at Ophelia's grave, challenged him to a "brother's wager" with the foils. At this, by the king's direction, he used a poisoned and buttonless foil; and with it he wounded Hamlet, knowing that the wound must be fatal. Hamlet, incensed at the blow, redoubled his efforts and disabled his opponent; and, in restoring him a weapon, he accidentally gave him the wrong one. Then he himself innocently wounded Laertes with the poisoned point.

At that very moment the queen, who had just tasted some wine which the king had prepared for Hamlet, fell dead, shrieking out

that she was poisoned; and Laertes, realizing that he too had been wounded mortally by the poisoned foil, confessed all. Thereupon Hamlet turned his sword on his uncle, thus fulfilling the oath made to his father's spirit.

5. CRITICAL REMARKS.

As the title of the play shows, the main interest centres round a single figure—that of the young prince, the son of a noble father and a weak mother. Of his father he himself said:—

"He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again" (i. 2. 187);

his mother stands self-condemned, a woman of weak will and strong passions. Consequently, his own character is complicated and rather contradictory; and this is quite appropriate, i.e. thoroughly in keeping with the general uncertainty of human motives and actions. At the same time, it causes some difficulty and considerable difference of opinion about the whole play, and specially about the character of HAMLET himself.

Some people think that Shakespeare meant to describe a great soul under circumstances for which it was, nevertheless, not quite great enough; and they support their view by quoting Hamlet's own words:—

"The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right." (i. 5. 171)

From this point of view Hamlet may be regarded as a man of a highly intellectual and moral nature, but without the mental and physical strength to become a hero like his father.

Other people think that Shakespeare meant to describe the paralyzing effect of too much consideration of the contingencies and possible consequences of an action; and these, again, can quote his own words in support of their view:—

"The native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action" (iii. 1. 84).

From this point of view Hamlet may be regarded as a man of weak will—will as weak as his mother's—with a natural tendency to dissimulation and a strong element of cowardice.

Others, again, think that Shakespeare meant to illustrate the practical necessity of a due proportion between facts and fancies; and from this point of view Hamlet has an excess of intellectuality and a lack of practical activity; he pays too much attention to the workings of his own fancies and too little attention to the pressing facts of everyday life. Consequently, when he is suddenly plunged into circumstances demanding instant action, he procrastinates till he is almost powerless to act.

It may help us to arrive at a true estimate of Hamlet, from Shakespeare's point of view, if we notice what his friends thought of him, and what kind of men his friends were. Horatio, the devotedly unselfish "scholar and soldier", and Fortinbras, the firm self-possessed leader who is destined to reorganise the shaken kingdom and stand alone successful in the end, agree in their estimate of him; the humble servant speaks of his sweet and noble heart (v. 2. 342); the proud leader bids four captains

"Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally" (v. 2. 380).

The action of the play also brings out certain facts about him which can scarcely be misunderstood.

He was assuredly *brave*, and showed his courage in very different ways. For instance, he was as ready to follow the ghost (i. 4. 65), in spite of the earnest entreaties of his brave friends, as he was to board the pirate ship alone (iv. 6. 18) in contempt for cowardice and treachery; and his consistent attitude towards anything that was not absolutely sincere and noble, was one of unsparing sarcasm and hostility, cf. his treatment of the king, Polonius, Osric, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

He was also intensely *affectionate*; and it is, perhaps, not too much to say that, if either Ophelia or his mother had been worthy of him and his love, he would have succeeded instead of failing in the task assigned him. The vehemence of his love for his father is, of course, one of the most important features of the whole situation; and even for his unworthy mother he had a strong affection. The passage in i. 2. 70, &c., brings out his love for both father and mother, and should be compared with his own words about his mother (iii. 2. 353) after he knows the truth.

He certainly has *self-control*, and, indeed, considers it to be the greatest ornament in manners. He tells the First Player (iii. 2. 7):—

"You must acquire and beget a temperance";

and directly afterwards he speaks to Horatio in the same strain:—

"Blest are those
Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled.
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core" (iii. 2. 62).

He himself shows the most marvellous self-control while Horatio and Marcellus are telling him about the appearance of the ghost (i. 2. 220, &c.), and, again, in his interviews with the ghost (i. 5.), with his mother (iii. 4. 140), and with Laertes (v. 2. 211). Even actions which seem to be rash, e.g. the rejection of Ophelia's love (iii. 1.) and the murder of Polonius (iii. 4. 24), are really part of his scheme of vengeance:—

"Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger".

Indeed, his self-control absolutely degenerates into an excess of *caution*. He keeps the ghost's appearance a close secret, and makes even his dearest and most trusted friends swear to do the same (i. 5. 125); he assumes madness (i. 5. 154); he devises 'the play within the play' (ii. 2. 567); he is for ever meditating and reflecting on far-reaching ends and considerations, even when both his natural impulse and his national customs spur him to instant revenge, cf. the famous soliloquy (iii. 1. 56); the nature of the deed is repugnant to him, and he intends to be master of the circumstances which oppress him—to be quite sure that he is right both in the revenge itself and in the particular method of taking it.

He is a man of great *culture*, with that strong love of *truth* which almost invariably accompanies a real feeling for beauty. His appreciation and knowledge of dramatic poetry are well brought out in his talks with the First Player (ii. 2. 412; iii. 2. 1); though thirty years of age, he is anxious to return to Wittenberg (i. 2. 112); he is continually reflecting on grave problems of art and philosophy—the nature of man, the object of life, the Greek ideal of moderation.

He is also *humorous*, with the deep pathetic humour of the scholar; for the faculty of the punster is the same as that of the great critic who 'emends' some corrupt Greek or Latin text. Even in his moments of intensest pain he makes his pun or his point; and in

this Shakespeare shows his extraordinary knowledge of human nature, for the source of tears and laughter is one and the same. Cf. v. i. 166, &c.

One further point must be noticed, if only on account of the mass of controversy to which it has given rise; it is the question of Hamlet's madness. If a man's own words and the opinion of unprejudiced friends are worthy of trust, Hamlet was not mad. He warned Horatio that he might think meet

"To put an antic disposition on" (i. 5. 154);

he told the two courtiers that both they and his uncle-father and aunt-mother were deceived:—"I am but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw" (ii. 2. 359); he asserted pointedly to his mother:—

"I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft" (iii. 4. 180).

Again, that a sane man should say that he intended to feign madness, should do so, should subsequently go mad, should then commit a murder, and should still assert that he was feigning madness in order to divert the suspicions of the murdered man, is incredible.

Lastly, not a single individual thought he was mad except those whom he deliberately deceived. The players were, at least, as capable of judging as Polonius and his feeble-minded daughter; the grave-diggers were quite as shrewd as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern; Horatio knew him just as well as the queen did; and there is much more evidence that the king thought him sane than that Fortinbras thought him insane.

OPHELIA is, in some ways, the feminine counterpart of Hamlet; but, whereas Hamlet's only difficulty is to express himself in action, her still more reserved woman's nature finds difficulty in expressing itself even in language. She is dreamy, silent, and sweet, but very weak—so weak as to be positively helpless; and, therefore, she must win our pity in spite of her unwilling treachery to Hamlet. For her songs, when she is insane (iv. 5. 22), prove the depth of her love for him; and yet she betrays him to her father apparently without hesitation, and deserts him at the very moment when a woman's help and love might have saved him. But she is the daughter of a fool, and is motherless.

Laertes, Horatio, and the king, seem all intended to throw into relief the character of Hamlet. LAERTES, unlike Hamlet, never

deliberates; but, like Hamlet, he is so perfectly sincere that the king has great difficulty in persuading him to dissimulate (iv. 5.; iv. 7.). The KING, unlike both, is a coward and a sneak; but he deliberates almost as profoundly as Hamlet, and acts almost as promptly as Laertes. HORATIO alone is sincere, deliberate, prompt. Indeed, Hamlet describes him (iii. 2. 48, &c.) as the personification of justice and self-control; he thinks of every one, and gives each man his due. Consequently, he never has time enough for thinking about himself to lose his self-control, and he is never pushing his own interest far enough to bring it into conflict with that of any one else.

Polonius and Fortinbras perhaps represent the two classes of Elizabethan courtiers. FORTINBRAS is the young, deep-hearted, high-souled leader, of "mettle hot and full to some enterprise that hath a stomach in't" (i. 1. 96, &c.). POLONIUS is a fawning, superficial, time-serving proverb-monger, who—in the first part of the play—supplies the comic element, which the grave-diggers supply afterwards.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark

HAMLET, son to the late, and nephew to the present King

POLONIUS, lord chamberlain

HORATIO, friend to Hamlet

LAERTES, son to Polonius

VOLTIMAND

CORNELIUS,

ROSENCRANTZ,

GUILDENSTERN,

OSRIC,

A Gentleman,

A Priest

MARCELLUS, } Officers

BERNARDO, }

FRANCISCO, a soldier

RYNALDO, servant to Polonius

Players

Two Clowns, grave diggers

FORTINBRAS, Prince of Norway,

A Captain

English Ambassadors

GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet

OPHELIA, daughter to Polonius

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants

Ghost of Hamlet's Father

SCENE *Denmark*

HAMLET.

ACT I.

SCENE I: *Elsinore. A platform before the castle.*

FRANCISCO *at his post. Enter to him* BERNARDO.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks: 't is bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night. 10

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,

The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who is there?

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:

Who hath relieved you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night. [Exit.

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,

What, is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus. 20

Mar. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says 't is but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:
Therefore I have encreased him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night,
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush, 't will not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile; 30
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we have two nights seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,
When yond same star that 's westward from the pole
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one,—

Enter Ghost.

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again! 40

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that 's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See, it stalks away! 50

Hor. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!

[*Exit Ghost.*

Mar. 'T is gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale:
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on 't?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on 60
 When he the ambitious Norway combated;
 So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle, *encounter*
 He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
 'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
 With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work I knew not;
 But, in the gross and scope of my opinion, *conclusion*
 This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows, 70
 Why this same strict and most observant watch
 So nightly toils the subject of the land, *conclusion*
 And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
 And foreign mart for implements of war;
 Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
 Does not divide the Sunday from the week;
 What might be toward, that this swate haste *hor*
 Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day:
 Who is't that can inform me?

Hor. That can I; 80
 At least the whisper goes so. Our last king,
 Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
 Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
 Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
 Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—
 For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—
 Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
 Well ratified by law and heraldry, *heraldic law*
 Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
 Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror:
 Against the which a moiety competent *adequate* 90
 Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
 Had he been vanquisher; *but* as, by the same covenant *term*
 And carriage of the article design'd, *term*
 His fell to Hamlet: Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
 Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
 Shark'd up a list of lawless resolutes, *lawless*
 For food and diet, to some enterprise
 That hath a stomach in't: which is no other—
 As it doth well appear unto our state—
 But to recover of us, by strong hand
 And terms compulsory, those foresaid lands *conclusion*.

So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Ber. I think it be no other but e'en so:
Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was and is the question of these wars.

110

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precursor of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on, have
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.

120

Re-enter Ghost.

But soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:

If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me!

130

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
Speak of it: stay, and speak! [*Cock crows.*] Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

140

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber.

'T is here.

Hor.

'T is here.

Mar. 'T is gone!

[*Exit Ghost.*]

We do it wrong, being so majestic,
To offer it the show of violence;

For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,

The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn, 150

Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat

Awake the god of day; and at his warning,

Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,

The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine: and of the truth herein

This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.

Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes

Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,

The bird of dawning singeth all night long: 160

And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad,

The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,

No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,

So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Hor. So have I heard and do in part believe it.

But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill:

Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,

Let us impart what we have seen to-night

Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life, 170

This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him:

Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,

As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently. [Exeunt.]

SCENE 2: *A room of state in the castle.*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,

The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
 Have we, as 't were with a defeated joy,—
 With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
 With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
 In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
 Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
 With this affair along. For all our thanks. 10
 Now follows that you know,—young Fortinbras,
 Holding a weak supposal of our worth, 15
 Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
 Colleague'd with the dream of his advantage,
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
 Importing the surrender of those lands
 Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
 To our most valiant brother. So much for him.
 Now for ourself and for this time of meeting:
 Thus much the business is: we have here writ
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
 Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears 20
 Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
 His further gait herein; in that the levies, 25
 The lists and full proportions, are all made
 Out of his subject: and we here dispatch
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
 Giving to you no further personal power
 To business with the king more than the scope
 Of these delated articles allow. 30
 Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty. 35

Cor. }
Vol. } In that and all things will we show our duty. 40

King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
 You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
 And lose your voice: what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
 The head is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer.

Dread my lord,

50

Your leave and favour to return to France ;
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
 To show my duty in your coronation,
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
 By laboursome petition, and at last
 Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent :
 I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
 And thy best graces spend it at thy will !
 But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Ham. [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less than kind

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord: I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
 And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not for ever with thy veiled lids

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:

Thou know'st 't is common; all that lives must die,
 Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,
 Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not 'seems'.
 'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,

No, nor the fruitful liver in the eye,

Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,

Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,

That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,

For they are actions that a man might play:

But I have that within which passeth show;

These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
 To give these mourning duties to your father:

But, you must know, your father lost a father,

That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound

In filial obligation for some term

To do obsequious sorrow: but to persevere

In obstinate condolence is a course

Of impious stubbornness; 't is unmanly grief:

70

80

90

It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,
 A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
 An understanding simple and unschool'd:
 For what we know must be and is as common
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
 Why should we in our peevish opposition
 Take it to heart? Fie! 't is a fault to heaven,
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
 To reason most absurd, whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
 From the first corse till he that died to-day,
 'This must be so'. We pray you, throw to earth
 This unprevailing woe, and think of us
 As of a father: for let the world take note,
 You are the most immediate to our throne;
 And with no less nobility of love
 Than that which dearest father bears his son,
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,
 It is most retrograde to our desire:
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain
 Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

100

110

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:
 I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

120

King. Why, 't is a loving and a fair reply:
 Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;
 This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
 Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof
 No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
 And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
 How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the uses of this world!
 Fie on't! ah fie! 't is an unweeded garden,
 That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
 But two months dead! nay, not so much, not two:

130

So excellent a king; that was, to this,
 Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
 Must I remember? why, she would hang on him
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on: and yet, within a month—
 Let me not think on't—Fraillty, thy name is woman!—
 A little month, or ere those shoes were old
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears, why she, even she—
 O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
 Would have mourn'd longer—married with my uncle,
 My father's brother, but no more like my father
 Than I to Hercules: within a month:
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
 She married. $\times \times$
 It is not, nor it cannot come to good:
 But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well:

Horatio,—or I do forget myself. 161

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you:
 And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?
 Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord—

Ham. I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir.
 But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so, 170
 Nor shall you do mine ear that violence
 To make it truster of your own report
 Against yourself: I know you are no truant.
 But what is your affair in Elsinore?
 We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
 I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked-meats 180
 Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
My father!—methinks I see my father.

Hor. O where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him—once; he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw? who?

190

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father!

Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed at point exactly, cap-à-pé,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them the third night kept the watch:
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes: I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

200

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did;
But answer made it none: yet once methought
It lifted up its head and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.

210

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

220

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 't is true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

Mar. } We do, my lord.
Ber. }

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

Mar. } Arm'd, my lord.
Ber. }

Ham. From top to toe?

Mar. } My lord, from head to foot.
Ber. }

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up. 230

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. } And fix'd his eyes upon you?
Hor. }

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. } I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amazed you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. } Longer, longer.
Ber. }

Hor. Not when I saw't.

Ham. } His beard was grizzled? no? 240

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night;
Perchance 't will walk again.

Hor. } I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,

I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape

And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,

If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,

Let it be tenable in your silence still;

And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,

Give it an understanding, but no tongue: 250

I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:

Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,

* I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: farewell.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!
Till then sit still my soul: foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. [*Exit.*

SCENE 3: *A room in Polonius's house.*

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessities are embark'd: farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute,
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:

10

For nature crescent does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
And now no soil nor cause doth besmirch
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal. *Oph.*
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open

20

30

^{hiew them}
 To his unmaster'd importunity. ^{rehearsal}
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
 Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes:
 The canker galls the infants of the spring
 Too oft before their buttons be disclosed,
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
 Contagious blastments are most imminent. ✓
 Be wary then; best safety lies in fear:
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
 As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
 Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
 Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine, ^{or}
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads ^{and} ^{leaves} 50
 And recks not his own rede.

Laer. O, fear me not.
 I stay too long: but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;
 Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!
 The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
 And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!
 And these few precepts in thy memory
 See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
 Nor any unproportion'd thought his act. 60
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
 Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel,
 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Beware
 Of entrance to a quarrel, but, being in,
 Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.
 Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice:
 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment. ^{opinion}
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
 But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
 And they in France of the best rank and station 70

Are of a most select and generous chief in that.
 Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
 This above all: to thine own self be true,
 And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man.

80

Farewell! my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you; go; your servants tend. *wait*

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well
 What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
 And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell.

[Exit.

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:

90

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
 Given private time to you, and you yourself
 Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
 If it be so—as so 't is put on me,
 And that in way of caution—I must tell you,
 You do not understand yourself so clearly
 As it behoves my daughter and your honour.
 What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
 Of his affection to me.

100

Pol. Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,
 Unsifted in such perilous circumstance. *dangerous matters off*
 Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby,
 That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
 Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
 Or—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase, *by*
 Running it thus—you'll tender me a fool.

Laer. My lord, he hath importuned me with love
 In honourable fashion.

110

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
 With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
 When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
 Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,

Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
 Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
 You must not take for fire. From this time 120
 Be something scatter of your maiden presence;
 Set your entreatments at a higher rate *(Curses)*
 Than a command to part. For Lord Hamlet,
 Believe so much in him, that he is young,
 And with a larger tether may he walk
 Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,
 Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
 Not of that dye which their investments show,
 But mere implorators of unholy suits,
 Breathing like sanctified and pious frauds *(hands)* 130
 The better to beguile. This is for all:
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you so slander any moment leisure
 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
 Look to't, I charge you: come your ways.
Oph. I shall obey, my lord. *All* [Exeunt.]

SCENE 4: *The platform.**Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.**Ham.* The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.*Ham.* What hour now?*Hor.* I think it lacks of twelve.*Ham.* No, it is struck.*Hor.* Indeed? I heard it not: then it draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.*[A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off within.]*
What does this mean, my lord?*Ham.* The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down, 10
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.*Hor.* Is it a custom?*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't:
But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduced and tax'd of other nations:

They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
 Soil our addition; and indeed it takes 20
 From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
 The pith and marrow of our attribute.

So, oft it chances in particular men,
 That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
 As, in their birth—wherein they are not guilty,
 Since nature cannot choose his origin—
 By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
 Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens
 The form of plausible manners, that these men, 30
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—
 Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
 As infinite as man may undergo—
 Shall in the general censure take corruption
 From that particular fault: the dram of eale
 Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
 To his own scandal.

Enter GHOST.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
 Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd, 40
 Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
 Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
 Thou comest in such a questionable shape
 That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
 King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!
 Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
 Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
 Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
 Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
 Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws, 50
 To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
 That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous; and we fools of nature
 So horridly to shake our disposition
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
 Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[Ghost beckons Hamlet.]

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
 As if it some impartment did desire
 To you alone.

That our devices still are overthrown ·
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own
 So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
 But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

P Queen. Nor canst thou to me give food, nor heaven light!
 Sport and repose lock from me day and night! 190
 I to desperation turn my trust and hope!

An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!
 Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
 Meet what I would have well and it destroy!
 Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
 If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now!

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile,
 My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
 The tedious day with sleep. [Sleeps]

P Queen. Sleep rock thy brain, 200
 And never come mischance between us twain! [Exit]

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence
 in t?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest, no offence
 i' the world

King. What do you call the play? 209

Ham. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This
 play is the image of a murder done in Vienna. Gonzago is
 the duke's name, his wife, Baptista you shall see anon, 'tis
 a knavish piece of work but what o' that? your majesty and
 we that have free souls, it touches us not let the galled jade
 wince, our withers are unwrung

Enter Lucianus

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I
 could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. Still better, and worse. 220

Ham. So you must take your husbands. Begin, murderer,
 leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come 'the croaking
 raven doth bellow for revenge'.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
 Confederate season, else no creature seeing,
 Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

229

[Pours the poison into the sleeper's ear.]

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in very choice Italian: you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What, frightened with false fire?

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light: away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[Exit all but Hamlet and Horatio.]

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

240

The hart ungalled play;

For some must watch, while some must sleep;

Thus runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers— if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me—with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

250

This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

A very, very — pajock.

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning?

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ah! Come, some music! come, the recorders:

For if the king like not the comedy,

261

Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.

Come, some music!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Guild. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guild. The king, sir, —

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guild. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guild. No, my lord, rather with choler. 276

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to the doctor. for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guild. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir: pronounce.

Guild. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome. 279

Guild. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guild. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased. but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command, or rather, as you say, my mother. therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say, - 289

Ros. Then thus she says; your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers 300

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but 'While the grass grows',— the proverb is something musty.

Re-enter Players with recorders.

O, the recorders! let me see one. To withdraw with you:— why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil? 311

Guild. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guild. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guild. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guild. I know no touch of it, my lord. 320

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guild. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'S blood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me. 335

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel? 340

Pol. By the mass, and 't is like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then I will come to my mother by and by. [*Aside.*] They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. [*Exit* Polonius.]

Ham. 'By and by' is easily said. Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt all but* Hamlet.]

'T is now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day

Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
 O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
 The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
 Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
 I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
 My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;
 How in my words soever she be shent,
 To give them seals never, my soul, consent!

360
 [Exit..

SCENE 3: *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
 To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;
 I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
 And he to England shall along with you:
 The terms of our estate may not endure
 Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow
 Out of his lunacies.

Guild. We will ourselves provide:
 Most holy and religious fear it is
 To keep those many many bodies safe
 That live and feed upon your majesty.

10

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
 With all the strength and armour of the mind,
 To keep itself from noyance; but much more
 That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests
 The lives of many. The cease of majesty
 Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
 What's near it with it: it is a massy wheel,
 Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
 To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
 Are mortr'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,
 Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
 Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

20

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
 For we will fetters put upon this fear,
 Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. }

Guild. }

We will haste us.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet:
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I'll warrant she'll tax him home:
And, as you said, and wisely was it said, 30
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord. [*Exit Polonius.*]
O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will: *
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent; 40
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer but this twofold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up; 50
My fault is past. But O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder'?
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself 60
Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults;
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: what can it not?
Yet what can it when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,

Art more engaged! Help, angels! make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel, 70
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't: and so he goes to heaven;
And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd:
A villain kills my father; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
O, this is hire and salary, not revenge. 80
He took my father grossly, full of bread,
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And how his audit stands who knows save Heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
[*T*]is heavy with him; and am I then revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No!
Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent:
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage,
At game, a-swearing, or about some act 90
That has no relish of salvation in't;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs my sickly days. [*Exit.*]
King. [*Rising.*] My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [*Exit.*]

SCENE 4: *The Queen's closet.*

Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look you lay home to him:
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll sconce me even here.
Pray you, be round with him.

Ham. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother!

Queen. I'll warrant you, fear me not. Withdraw, I hear
him coming. [*Polonius hides behind the arras.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother, what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended. 10

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And— would it were not so!—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge,
You go not till I set you up a glass

Where you may see the inmost part of you. 20

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!

Pol. [Behind.] What, ho! help, help, help!

Ham. [Drawing.] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducal,
dead! *[Makes a pass through the arras.]*

Pol. [Behind.] O, I am slain! *[Falls and dies.]*

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not? is it the king?

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady, 't was my word. 30

[Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.]

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

Leave wringing of your hands; peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff,

If damned custom have not brass'd it so *[Falls.]*

That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act 40

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,

Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love

And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows

As false as dicers' oaths O, such a deed
 As from the body of contraction plucks
 The very soul, and sweet religion makes
 A rhapsody of words: heaven's face doth glow;
 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
 With tristful visage, as against the doom,
 Is thought sick at the act 50

Queen Ay me, what act,
 That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?
Ham Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers
 See, what a grace was sealed on this brow;
 Hypocion's curls, the front of Jove himself,
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
 A station like the herald Mercury
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
 A combination and a form indeed,
 Where every god did seem to set his seal
 To give the world assurance of a man
 This was your husband: Look you now, what follows
 Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
 Blasting his wholesome brother: Have you eyes?
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
 And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
 You cannot call it love, for at your age
 The hasty day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
 And waits upon the judgement: and what judgement 70
 Would step from this to this? Sense sure you have.
 Else could you not have motion, but sure that sense
 Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
 Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
 But it reserved some quantity of choice,
 To serve in such a difference: What devil was't
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
 Lyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense 80
 Could not so mope.

O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
 And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame
 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge.
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn
 And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
 {Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
 {And there I see such black and grained spots 90
 {As will not leave their tinct.

O, speak to me no more;
 These words like daggers enter in mine ears;
 No more, sweet Hamlet!

Ham. A murderer and a villain;
 A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
 Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
 And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more!

Ham. A king of shreds and patches—

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings, 100
 {You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?

Queen. Alas, he's mad!

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
 That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
 The important acting of your dread command?
 O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget: this visitation
 Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
 But look, amazement on thy mother sits;
 O, step between her and her fighting soul: 110
 Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:
 Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you,
 That you do bend your eye on vacancy
 And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
 Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
 And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
 Your bedded hair, like life in excitements,
 Start up and stand an end. O gentle son,
 Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper 120
 Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!
 His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
 Would make them capable. Do not look upon me;
 Lest with this piteous action you convert
 My stern effects: then what I have to do

Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!

My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal! [*Exit Ghost.* 132]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music: it is not madness
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness 140
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times 150
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to my uncle;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good 160
He likewise gives a frock or livery
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either quell the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be blest,

I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,

[*Pointing to Polonius.*

I do repent: but heaven hath pleased it so, 170
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king for a pair of kisses
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness, 180
But mad in craft. 'T were good you let him know;
For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gh.
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assured, if words be made of breath, 190
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack,

I had forgot: 't is so concluded on.

Ham. There's letters seal'd; and my two schoolfellows
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way;
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 't is the sport to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petar, and 't shall go hard 200
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the morn: O, 't is most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.
This man shall set me packing.
Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; Hamlet dragging Polonius.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I: *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves:
You must translate; 't is fit we understand them.
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while,
[*Exit Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier: in his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries 'A rat, a rat!'
And in this brainish apprehension kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd and out of haunt,
This mad young man: but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,

And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done. So haply slander 40
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name
And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE 2 : *Another room in the castle.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Safely stowed.

Ros. } [*Within*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Guild. } [*Within*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham. But soft, what noise? who calls on Hamlet?
O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what? 10

Ham. That I can keep your counsel and not mine own.
Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! what replication should
be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his
rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best
service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner
of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed: when he
needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and,
sponge, you shall be dry again. 20

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it; a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish
ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go
with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

Guild. A thing, my lord?

Ham. Of nothing; bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 3: *Another room in the castle.*

Enter KING, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him.
He's loved of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes:
And where 't is so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are relieved, 10
Or not at all.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

How now! what hath befall'n?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper! where? 19

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain
convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is
your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us,
and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean
beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table:
that's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a
king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar. 31

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see; if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there.

[*To some Attendants.*

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence
With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself;
The bark is ready and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England. 40

Ham. For England?

King.

Ay, Hamlet.

Ham.

Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. But, come; for England! Farewell, dear mother

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet. 49

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh, and so, my mother. Come, for England! [*Ex. ut.*

King. Follow him at foot, tempt him with speed aboard;
Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night:
Away! for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair: pray you, make haste.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught—
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy fres awe
Pays homage to us—thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters congruing to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me: till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. 60

[*Exit.*

SCENE 4: *A plain in Denmark.**Enter FORTINBRAS, a Captain, and Soldiers, marching.*

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
 Tell him that by his license Fortinbras
 Craves the conveyance of a promised march
 Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
 If that his majesty would aught with us,
 We shall express our duty in his eye;
 And let him know so..

Cap. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly on. [*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*]

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and others.

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir. 10

Ham. How purposed, sir, I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
 Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
 We go to gain a little patch of ground
 That hath in it no profit but the name.
 To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it; 20
 Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
 A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, it is already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
 Will not debate the question of this straw:

This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,

That inward breaks, and shows no cause without

Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir. 29

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*]

Ros. Will't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

How all occasions do inform against me,
 And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
 If his chief good and market of his time
 Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
 Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,

Looking before and after, gave us not
 That capability and god-like reason
 To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
 Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple 40
 Of thinking too precisely on the event,
 A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom
 And ever three parts coward, I do not know
 Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do';
 Sith I have cause and will and strength and means
 To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort me:
 Witness this army of such mass and charge
 Led by a delicate and tender prince,
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd
 Makes mouths at the invisible event, 50
 Exposing what is mortal and unsure
 To all that fortune, death and danger dare,
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
 Is not to stir without great argument,
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
 Excitements of my reason and my blood,
 And let all sleep? while to my shame I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men, 60
 That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
 Whereon the number cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tomb enough and continent
 To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [Exit.

SCENE 5: *Elsinore. A room in the castle.*

Enter QUEEN, HORATIO, and a Gentleman.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gent. She is importunate, indeed distract:
 Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Gent. She speaks much of her father; says she hears
 There's tricks i' the world, and hems and beats her heart,
 Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
 That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
 Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
 The hearers to collection; they aim at it,

And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts ; 10.
Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Hor. 'T were good she were spoken with ; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Queen. Let her come in. *[Exit Gentleman.]*

[Aside.] To my sick soul, as sip's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss :
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt. 20

Re-enter Gentleman, with OPHELIA.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia!

Oph. *[Sings]* How should I your true love know
From another one?

By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

[Sings] He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone ; 30
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia,—

Oph. Pray you, mark.

[Sings] White his shroud as the mountain-snow,—

Enter KING.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. *[Sings]* Larded with sweet flowers ;
Which bewept to the grave did go
With true love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady? 39

Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's
daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what
we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this ; but when they
ask you what it means, say you this :

[Sings] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,

And I a maid at your window,
To be your valentine.

King. How long hath she been thus? 50

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think that they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it: and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [Exit.

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [Exit Horatio.

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies, 60
But in battalions. First, her father slain:
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove. the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,
In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgement,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts:
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France; 70
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death. [A noise within.

Queen.

Alack, what noise is this?

King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.

Enter another Gentleman.

What is the matter?

Gent.

Save yourself, my lord:

80

The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,

They cry 'Choose we: Laertes shall be king!'
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds:
'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!'

90

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

King. The doors are broke. *[Noise within.*

Enter LAERTES, armed; Danes following.

Laer. Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Danes. We will, we will. *[They retire without the door.*

Laer. I thank you: keep the door. O thou vile king,
Give me my father!

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like? 100

Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:

There's such divinity doth hedge a king,

That treason can but peep to what it would,

Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,

Why thou art thus incensed. Let him go, Gertrude.

Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil! 110

Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!

I dare damnation. To this point I stand,

That both the worlds I give to negligence,

Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged

Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world:

And for my means, I'll husband them so well,

They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty

Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge, 120

That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,

Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgement pierce
As day does to your eye. 130

Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love, and where 't is fine, 140
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. [*Sings*]

They bore him barefaced on the bier;

Hey non, nonny, nonny, hey nonny;

And in his grave rain'd many a tear,—

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

Oph. [*Sings*] You must sing a-down a-down,

An you call him a-down-a. 150

O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward, that
stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love,
remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance
fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines: there's rue
for you; and here's some for me: we may call it herb of grace
o' Sundays: O, you must wear your rue with a difference.
There's a daisy: I would give you some violets, but they
withered all when my father died: they say he made a good
end,— 163

[Sings] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Oph. [Sings] And will a' not come again? /

And will a' not come again?

No, no, he is dead:

Go to thy death-bed:

170

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his poll.

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan:

God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' you. [Exit.

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,

180

Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,

And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:

If by direct or by collateral hand

They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,

Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,

To you in satisfaction; but if not,

Be you content to lend your patience to us,

And we shall jointly labour with your soul

To give it due content.

Laer.

Let this be so;

His means of death, his obscure funeral,

190

No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,

No noble rite nor formal ostentation,

Cry to be heard, as 't were from heaven to earth,

That I must call 't in question.

King.

So you shall;

And where the offence is let the great axe fall

I pray you, go with me.

[Exeunt.

SCENE 6: Another room in the castle.

Enter HORATIO and a^o Servant

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Serv. Sea-faring men, sir: they say they have letters for
you.

Hor. Let them come in.

[Exit Servant.

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

First Sailor. God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

First Sailor. He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir : it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England ; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is. 12

Hor. [Reads] 'Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them. on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy: but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell. He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.'

Come, I will make you way for these your letters; 29
And don't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [Exeunt.]

SCENE 7: *Another room in the castle.**Enter KING and LAERTES.*

King. Now must your conscience my acquaintance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which bath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Laer It well appears. but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crineful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirred up.

King. O, for two special reasons; 10
Which may to you perhaps seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong The queen his mother

Lives almost by his looks; and for myself—
 My virtue or my plague, be it either which—
 She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
 That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
 I could not but by her. The other motive,
 Why to a public count I might not go,
 Is the great love the general gender bear him;
 Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
 Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
 Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
 Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
 Would have reverted to my bow again,
 And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
 A sister driven into desperate terms,
 Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
 Stood challenger on mount of all the age
 For her perfections: but my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think
 That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
 That we can let our beard be shook with danger
 And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
 I loved your father, and we love ourself;
 And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

Enter a Messenger.

How now! what news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
 This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
 They were given me by Claudio; he received them
 Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.
 Leave us.

[*Exit Messenger.*
Reads] 'High and mighty, You shall know I am set naked
 on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your
 kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto,
 recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.'
 'HAMLET.'

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
 Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. 'Naked'!

And in a postscript here, he says 'alone'. 51
Can you advise me?

Laer. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
'That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
'Thus didest thou'.

King. If it be so, Laertes—
As how should it be so, how otherwise,—
Will you be ruled by me?

Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd, 60
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be ruled;
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right. 70
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one, and that in my regard
Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth, 80
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy:—
I've seen myself, and served against, the French,
And they can well on horseback: but this gallant
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat,
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As had he been incorpor'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast: so far he topp'd my thought
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman was't?

King. A Norman.

90

Laer. Upon my life, Lamond.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out, 't would be a sight indeed
If one could match you: the scrimers of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this —

100

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father;
But that I know love is begun by time,
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still,
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too much: that we would do,
We should do when we would; for this 'would' changes
And lieth abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But to the quick o' the ulcer:
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

110

120

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence

130

And set a double varnish on the fame
 The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together,
 And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,
 Most generous and free from all contriving,
 Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
 A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
 Requite him for your father.

Laer.

I will do't:

And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.
 I bought an unction of a mountebank,
 So mortal that but dip a knife in it,
 Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
 Collected from all simples that have virtue
 Under the moon, can save the thing from death
 That is but scratch'd withal. I'll touch my point
 With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly, 't
 't may be death.

King.

Let's further think of this:

Weigh what convenience both of time and means
 May fit us to our shape: if this should fail,
 And that our drift look through our bad performance,
 'T were better not assay'd: therefore this project
 Should have a back or second, that might hold
 If this did blast in proof. Soft! let me see:
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings:
 I ha't:
 When in your motion you are hot and dry—
 As make your bouts more violent to that end—
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him
 A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
 Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise?

Enter QUEEN.

How now, sweet queen!

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel, }
 So fast they follow: your sister's drown'd, Laertes. }

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
 There with fantastic garlands did she come
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
 But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:

There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
 Clumbering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
 When down her weedy trophies and herself
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
 And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up:
 Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes;
 As one incapable of her own distress,
 Or like a creature native and indued
 Unto that element: but long it could not be
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
 To muddy death. 180

Laer. Alas, then she is drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
 And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
 It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
 Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
 The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord:
 I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
 But that this folly douts it. 190

King. Let's follow, Gertrude:

How much I had to do to calm his rage!

Now fear I this will give it start again;

Therefore let's follow. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE 1: A Churchyard.

Enter two Clowns, with spades, &c.

First Clown. Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

Second Clown. I tell thee she is; and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

First Clown. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

Second Clown. Why, 't is found so. 8

First Clown. It must be 'se offendendo'; it cannot be else. For here lies the point; if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

Second Clown. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

First Clown. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good; here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes: mark you that; but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal; he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

Second Clown. But is this law? 20

First Clown. Ay, marry, is't; crowner's quest law.

Second Clown. Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

First Clown. Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession. 30

Second Clown. Was he a gentleman?

First Clown. A' was the first that ever bore arms.

Second Clown. Why, he had none.

First Clown. What, a' a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digged: could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

Second Clown. Go to.

First Clown. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter? 41

Second Clown. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

First Clown. I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

Second Clown. 'Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?' 50

First Clown. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

Second Clown. Marry, now I can tell.

First Clown. To't.

Second Clown. Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, afar off.

First Clown. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your

dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say 'a grave-inaker': the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go get thee to Yaughan: fetch me a stoup of liquor. *[Exit Second Clown.]*

[He digs and sings]

In youth, when I did love, did love, 60

Methought it was very sweet,

To contract, O, the time, for-a my behove,

O, methought, there-a was nothing-a meet.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'T is e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

First Clown. *[Sings]*

But age, with his stealing steps,

Hath claw'd me in his clutch,

And hath shipped me intil the land,

As if I had never been such. 70

[Throws up a skull.]

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say 'Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, sweet lord?' This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not? 82

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so: and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on 't.

First Clown. *[Sings]*

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,

For and a shrouding sheet;

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet. 90

[Throws up another skull.]

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quilets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude

knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha? 105

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sirrah? 111

First Clown. Mine, sir.

[Sings] O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed: for thou liest in't.

First Clown. You lie out on't sir, and therefore 't is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine: 't is for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

First Clown. 'T is a quick lie, sir; 't will away again, from me to you. 121

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

First Clown. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

First Clown. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

First Clown. One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, this three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker? 134

First Clown. Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

First Clown. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England. 140

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

First Clown. Why, because a' was mad: a' shall recover his wits there; or, if a' do not, it's no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

First Clown. 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

First Clown. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How 'strangely'?

First Clown. Faith, e'en with losing his wits. 150

Ham. Upon what ground?

First Clown. Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

First Clown. I' faith, if a' be not rotten before a' die, a' will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

First Clown. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that a' will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years. 162

Ham. Whose was it?

First Clown. A mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

First Clown. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This?

First Clown. E'en that. 170

Ham. Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithce, Horatio, tell me one thing. 182

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah!

[*Putt down the skull.*]

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio? Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole? 191

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: as thus, Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth: of earth we make loam, and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay,

Might stop a hole to keep the wind away. 200

O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,

Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

But soft! but soft! aside here comes the king.

Enter Priests, &c. in procession; the Corpse of Ophelia, LAERTES, and Mourners following; KING, QUEEN, their trains, &c.

The queen, the courtiers; who is this they follow?

And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken

The corse they follow did with desperate hand

For do it own life: 'twas of some estate

Couch me awhile, and mark. [*Retiring with Horatio.*]

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes, a very noble youth: mark. 210

Laer. What ceremony else?

First Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarged

As we have warranty: her death was doubtful;

And, but that great command o'ersways the order,

She should in ground unsanctified have lodged

Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,

Shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her:

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,

Her maiden strowments and the bringing home

Of bell and burial. 220

Laer. Must there no more be done?

First Priest. No more be done:

We should profane the service of the dead

To sing a requiem and such rest to her,

As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' the earth:

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh

May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia?

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell! [*Scattering flowers.*]
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife; 230
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth a while,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:
[*Leaps into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he whose grief 240
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded heroes? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*]

Laer. The devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*]

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I pithee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear: hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder. 250

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,—

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*]

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son, what theme?

Ham. I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes. 260

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?

Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
 I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?
 To outface me with leaping in her grave?
 Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
 And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
 Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
 Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
 Make O-sa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
 I'll rant as well as thou.

270

Queen. This is mere madness:
 And thus awhile the fit will work on him;
 Anon, as patient as the female dove,
 When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
 His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir;
 What is the reason that you use me thus?
 I loved you ever, but it is no matter;
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,
 The cat will mew and dog will have his day. [*Exit.* 280

King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.
 [*To Laertes.*] [*Exit Horatio.*]
 Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
 We'll put the matter to the present push.
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
 This grave shall have a living monument:
 An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
 Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2. *A hall in the castle.*

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other;
 You do remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my lord!

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
 That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
 Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,
 And praised be rashness for it, let us know,
 Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
 When our deep plots do pall; and that should learn us
 There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
 Rough-hew them how we will,—

10

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
 My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark

Groped I to find out them; had my desire,
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again; making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,—
O royal knavery!—an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

30

Hor. Is't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

Hor. I beseech you.

Ham. Being thus be-netted round with villanies,—
Or I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play,—I sat me down,
Devised a new commission, wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning, but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service: wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

30

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like 'As 'es of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

40

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinaunt,
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in the form of the other,
Subscribed it, gave't the impression, placed it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

50

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites. 60

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, thinks thee, stand me now upon—
He that hath killed my king and stain'd my mother,
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage—is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil? 70

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life's no more than to say 'One'.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll court his favours:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace! who comes here? 80

Enter OSRIC.

Os. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to
know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be
lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'tis
a cough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Os. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should
impart a thing to you from his majesty. 90

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put
your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Os. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold: the wind is northerly.

Os. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot, or my
complexion—

Os. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, as 't were,—I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head: sir, this is the matter— 101

Ham. I beseech you to remember—

[Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.]

Os. Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see. 108

Ham. Sir, his demeanour suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearch and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his unbrage, nothing more.

Os. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Os. Sir?

120

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Os. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Os. I know you are not ignorant—

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir? 130

Os. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Ham. I dare not confess that; lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Os. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Os. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

139

Os. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has imputed, as I take it, six

French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilt, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew you must be edited by the margin ere you had done.

Os. The carriages, sir, are the hangers. 149

Ham. The phrase would be more germane to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this 'imponed', as you call it?

Os. The king, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How if I answer 'no'? 160

Os. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Os. Shall I deliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will.

Os. I commend my duty to your lordship. 170

Ham. Yours, yours. [*Exit Osric.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same breed that I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out. 180

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king and queen and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play. 191

Ham. She well instructs me. *[Exit Lord]*

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so: since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord,--

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would perhaps trouble a woman. 200

Hor. If your mind dislike anything, obey it. I will forestal their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit; we defy augury: there is special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 't is not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come. the readiness is all; since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, and Lords, OSRIC, and other Attendants with foils and gauntlets; a table and flagons of wine on it.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[The King puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's.]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong; But pardon't, as you are a gentleman. 210

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd

With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, honour and exception

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.

Who does it, then? His madness; if't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,

Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour
I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation,
Till by some elder masters of known honour
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungored. But till that time,
I do receive your offered love like love,
And will not wrong it. 230

Ham. I embrace it freely,
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir. 240

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both:
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a length?
[*They prepare to play.*]

Os. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table. 250

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,

The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth, 260

'Now the king drinks to Hamlet'. Come, begin:
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*]

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgement.

Os. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well; again.

King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health.

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*]

Give him the cup.

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.

Come. [*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows: 271

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good madam!

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.

King. [*Aside.*] It is the poison'd cup: it is too late.

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam: by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think 't.

Laer. [*Aside.*] And yet it is almost against my conscience.

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: you but dally; 280

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afraid you make a wanton of me.

Laer. Say you so? come on.

[*They play.*]

Os. Nothing, either way.

Laer. Have at you now!

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they
change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*]

King. Part them; they are incensed.

Ham. Nay, come, again. [*The Queen falls.*]

Os. Look to the queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?

Os. How is 't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery. 290

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swoonds to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet,—
The drink, the drink! I am poison'd. [*Dies.*]

Ham. O villainy! Ho! let the door be lock'd:
 Treachery! Seek it out.

Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;
 No medicine in the world can do thee good;
 In thee there is not half an hour of life;
 The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
 Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practice
 Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,
 Never to rise again: thy mother's poison'd:
 I can no more: the king, the king's to blame.

300

Ham. The point envenom'd too!
 Then, venom, to thy work. [Stabs the King.]

All. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt

Ham. Heie, thou murderous, damned Dane,
 Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?
 Follow my mother. [King dies.]

Laer. He is justly served;
 It is a poison temper'd by himself.
 Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
 Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
 Nor thine on me. [Dies.]

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
 I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!
 You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
 That are but mutes or audience to this act,
 Had I but time—as this fell sergeant, death,
 Is strict in his arrest—O, I could tell you—
 But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;
 Thou livest; report me and my cause aright
 To the unsatisfied. 320

Hor. Never believe it:
 I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:
 Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man,
 Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I'll have't.
 O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
 Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
 If thou dost ever hold me in thy heart,
 Absent thee from felicity awhile,
 And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
 To tell my story. 330

[March afar off, and shot within.]
 What warlike noise is this?

Os. Young Fortinbras with conquest come from Poland,
 To the ambassadors of England gives

This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited. The rest is silence. 340

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince:
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither? [March within.]

*Enter FORTINBRAS and the English Ambassadors, with
drums, colours, and Attendants.*

For. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it you would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

For. This quarry cries on havoc. O proud death,
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?

First Amb. The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks? 350

Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you:
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arrived, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgements, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver. 360

For. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience. 370
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:

I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me

Hor Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance
On plots and errors happen

For Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage,
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally. and, for his passage,
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.

380

Take up the bodies such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much unris.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

*[A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies,
after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.]*

NOTES.

Act I.—Scene I.

A soldier—Francisco—is on guard, alone, in the silence of midnight before the Castle of Elsinore, expecting to be relieved. If any challenge is heard at all it ought to come from him—but he himself is suddenly challenged by a timer Bernardo. This breach of military etiquette, and the noisy manner in which Bernardo speaks, show that he is nervous and startled.

1 Elsinore is on the east coast of Zealand, about 24 miles from Copenhagen. The Gothic castle, now called Kronborg, stands on a little promontory to the east of the port commanding the entrance to the Baltic.

2 *me* is emphatic both in sense and in its position in the verse.

3 Long live the king! This phrase may have an ironical reference to his speedy death, and certainly betrays his anxiety about his personal safety.

4 upon your hour. We still use the phrase 'upon this' and the simple preposition with *just* has the same meaning, e.g. 'it is just on the hour'.

5 Is struck. Intransitive verbs in Anglo-Saxon formed their perfect and pluperfect tenses with the auxiliary *to be*. The verbs *come* and *go* still use *to be* indifferently with *to have*, cf. l. 52, below.

now *New* has been conjectured, which would be an adjective form used adverbially but there were once two adverb forms—one ending in *e*, a dative suffix, which very easily dropped off, and the other ending in *ec* (like), which has been shortened into *-ly*. 'Like is therefore, a demonstrative (cf. "little cold", in l. 7 below, and "strife-making" in l. 147).

6 thee. The personal pronouns originally did not need to be compounded with *self* in order to have a reflexive sense.

7 much is a quantitative adjective, and the reflexive is used indifferently with the singular or the plural number of *any*, *all*, *none*, all of which denote either quantity or indefinite number.

thanks is a plural form which is generally treated now as a singular, cf. *news*, *olds*, *pains*.

8 There is special significance in Bernardo's anxiety to know whether Francisco has had 'a quiet good night'.

9 stirring. Supply 'has been'.

10 do meet (cf. 'doth make', l. 78).

An auxiliary verb is one which helps another verb to express its meaning, and which, in doing this, loses its own meaning. Consequently, *do* can be used now as an auxiliary only.

11 With a negative—"He does not start to-day."

12 In questions—"Do you know?"

13 For emphasis—"I do know."

14 rivals, i.e. sharers. Rivals were originally those who lived along the same river. They were continually disputing about their share of the water, which in Italy was so important for irrigation.

make haste. Bernardo is anxious not to be left alone.

15 Hægegon, or men bound (Latin *ligare* 'to bind') is rivals.

the Dane, i.e. 'The Dane' for excellence. Cf. the Scotch and Irish use of *the* in e.g. 'The Douglas', 'The O'Sullivan'. Many common names have been converted into proper names by the addition of *the*, e.g. *Le Havre*, *the Parson*, *the Crown*, &c. See note on l. 84.

16 give you Supply 'Goi' So death and wounds and for 'Christ's death' and 'Christ's wounds'

19 is Horatio there? This question, and Horatio's scepticism about the ghost, imply that Horatio had not been on guard lately

piece A joking way of saying he is there

21 again at once arouses the curiosity of the audience

23 fantasy is a doublet or halet in variation of *fancy*, the doublet form being generally either the older or the more popular. *Fantasy* is derived directly from the Latin *fancy* comes indirectly, through Norman French (*fantasie*) and *surface separate* and *sever*, *fantasy* and *faulx*

25 twice seen 'The ghost had appeared on two occasions, and, on each occasion, only when there were two men on guard

of us. Of which is simply a short form of *off* is used both of the agent and the instrument (the trigger of hammer), and the ellipsis 'all along of him'. *Of* is used in the strict sense of *off* from 'I'll not, to recover of us'

27 watch the minutes Prepositions are frequently omitted by Shakespeare after verbs expressing different kinds of emotion and speech, and after verbs which can easily be regarded as transitive. There is also always a tendency for expressions which are constantly repeated, to be shortened, especially by the cutting of inflections and prepositions. We still have a number of adverbial phrases of *time*, *man*, *ner*, &c., in which the preposition is omitted, e.g. 'this week', 'last night' (l. 35), 'wait a minute

minutes The word implies *continuous* and *careful* watching

28 come is a subjunctive mood. It expresses only the relation of a fact (an indicative mood. He *has* come, it is *not* here to the speaker (l. 1) that he *was* here) (He is not, — I *would* him, "wherever he be (He is *not* here, — I *do not* know where he is). "Take heed lest thou *fall*" (Thou *hast not* fallen yet, — thou *art* in danger. See l. 128.

29 approve our eyes, i.e. corroborate the witness of our eyes

30 tush The difference between the temperament of Horatio and that of his two friends at this point. No doubt, and he has not having been on guard before of not on l. 11 and to his wholly freedom from superstition. That Horatio was a scholar is stated by Marcellus in line 42, and is betrayed by his style of language in lines 80, 128, and 131 his familiarity with the Classics in line, 11, 120

31 assault is a soldier's word, of fortified below

3 what seen is a noun clause in apposition to *ghost*

sit we down Thus the silence in which the scene opened is repeated for the entry of the ghosts. This is called 'imperative of the first person', — sit we is due to a suppression of a main verb e.g. *sit you — we sit*

36 pole, i.e. the pole star The *half* line preceding, gives a pause for effect

37 made his course, i.e. 'so far completed his course is to be there', at exactly the same time last night

39 bell beating Striking clocks were not known yet in Italy, still less in Denmark, till the end of the thirteenth century. But bells were known to the Teutonic nations at a very early period.

40 break thee off This is not reflexive, but only unemphatic imperative moods, being themselves emphatic required in unemphatic pronoun and we now consider unemphatic pronouns so useless that we have discarded them altogether in this connection

42 scholar (Of note on l. 30) Horatio, being a scholar, spoke Latin, the language of the priests and therefore the language in which ghosts were supposed to speak

43 most like Compare this with line 30, and Horatio's conduct here with that on the reappearance of the ghost in line 127. He has in the meantime thought out reasons for the ghost's appearance.

45 would, i.e. *would*.

be spoke The mixture of various languages with English owing to

- conquest, commerce, and colonization, produced such an utter confusion of inflections that most of them were abandoned; but a few were retained, especially when their absence led to worse confusion, ~~as~~ the confusion *here* of the past participle with the past tense.
46. *usurp*st this time. This construction is called *zeugma*. The ghost *invades* (or ~~usurps~~ word) the night, and *usurps* the form of the dead king.
48. Denmark. The name of the kingdom is put for that of the king; cf. *Norway* in l. 60.
49. *sometimes* is an old genitive, like *once* and *always*, and means 'at one time', i.e. formerly.
55. *on't*. *On* and *of* are used indifferently in iv. 5. 177.
"Cod ha' mercy on his soul!
And of all Christian souls."
56. *might* has here its literal meaning of *could*. It is really the past tense of the Old English *magan* 'to be able'; and we still have the root meaning in the nouns *might* and *main*. Cf. '*may*', in l. 131.
57. *sensible* *avouch*, i.e. 'actual information' (through the senses). *Avouch* is from the root of *voice*, and therefore is inappropriate of eye-knowledge. *Sensible*, like many other adjectives in Shakespeare, has both an active and a passive meaning. Cf. *gracious*, in l. 165 below.
62. *parle* is an obsolete form of *parley*. Its usual meaning in Shakespeare is 'a conference between enemies'.
63. *sledded* *Polacks*, i.e. Poles, on sledges. Russia did not extend her empire to the Baltic till 1703; before that date Finland, Esthonia, and Livonia belonged to Poland.
65. *jump* is from the root of *jumble*. Here it means 'exactly'.
69. *gross* and *scoop*. This construction is called *hendiadys*, or expression of one thing by two. The words mean any 'general view' as opposed to the 'particular intention' of the ghost.
70. *good now*, i.e. Be good now—Come now.
72. *toils*. This so-called transitive use of an intransitive verb has a causative sense, cf. "he *walked* his horse over the bridge". Cf. v. 2. 9.
73. *cast*, like *avouch* in l. 37, and *impress* in l. 75, is an instance of a verb used for a noun. In proportion as a language becomes analytic, words are classified according to *function*, not *form*. As a verbal noun, *cast* ought to be *casting*.
N.B. Cannon were not in use in northern Europe at that time, but the Moors had used them in Spain. They were made of brass or bronze because these compounds are so easily cast. Cf. l. 39 above.
74. *mart*, i.e. marketing.
75. *press*. It was the custom in England to *press* (seize and compel) men to join the army and navy in time of war or threatened invasion.
more. The heavy burden of work imposed upon them prevented any distinction between Sundays and week-days—all alike were working days.
77. *toward*, i.e. in preparation, coming on. *Might*=literally 'can', cf. note on l. 56.
79. *is't*. We use *it* so often superfluously before verbs, especially as a temporary or representative subject, that we have lost the emphatic use of it before the relative. Cf. *Isaiah* li. 9, "Art thou not *it* that hath cut Rahab?"
81. *even but now*. The *but* is not redundant or tautological; without it *even now* would imply that the king was *still* in sight.
83. *thereto*. *There* is really the dative of *that*, and is naturally governed by the preposition 'or *for*'.
emulate is a verb used as an adjective. Cf. note on l. 73. The adjective is either *emulative* or *emulous*.
84. *The combat*, i.e. 'mortal combat'. Cf. "*The Plague*", and see note on l. 15.
Hamlet, i.e. the late king.
86. *compact* is accented on the last syllable, as if it were the adjective, not the noun.
87. Having all the binding force which a court of law and a court of honour could give.
88. *with his life*, i.e. 'along with his life', if he lost that.
N.B. the scholarly and legal

phraseology of this speech, e.g. 'the which', 'seized of', 'moiety', &c. *Moiety* (Latin *medietas*) ought to mean 'half'.

89. *seized of*, i.e. possessed of.

90. Against which lands a part fully equal in value was pledged by our king

91. *had returned* is the pluperfect subjunctive, and is answered by a pluperfect subjunctive in *had been*.

94. *carriage*, i.e. the tenor of the article (drawn up and) signed at the foot.

96. *unimproved mettle*. 'Hot and full of untempered metal', which needs to be plunged into cold water. *Un*, which is a Teutonic prefix, makes a hybrid with the Romance *improved*; but *un-improved* would have a very bad sound. We generally use *un-* now whenever we wish to emphasize the negative part of the compound, e.g. *un-safe*; *im-* makes the whole word negative, e.g. *infirm*. Consequently, *un-* is always used with participles, and has usually rather the stronger meaning.

97. *skirts*=out-skirts.

98. *sharked*, *resolutes*, i.e. 'hunted up a company of landless desperadoes'. *Sharked* is a verbal form taken directly from a noun, cf. i. 2. 37—"To business with the king". *Resolutes* is an adjective, inflected for plural, and then used as a noun, cf. *nobles*. In ii. 2. 474, we have "'t was caviare to the general"; and in i. 3. 126, "in few" is used as we now use "a short".

99. *food and diet* is an instance of bilingualism, i.e. the presence in a mixed language of different words from different sources for the same thing. *Food*, which is connected with *father*, is a Teutonic word, the Romance equivalent of which is *diet*. As the existence of these parallel words is due mainly to the Norman Conquest, it is natural that most of them should be found in connection with Law and Religion. Cf. *aid and abet*, *half and moiety*, *will and testament*; *acknowledge and confess*, *humble and lowly*, *pray and beseech*. *Chief head*, in i. 106, is a very similar construction.

100. *a stomach*, i.e. 'that requires courage'. The word is also used by Shakespeare in the senses of *inclination and pride*.

The state, therefore, needed a strong practical ruler like Fortinbras himself, not a philosopher like Hamlet.

101. *state*, i.e. government,

104. *of* has its literal sense 'off'. Cf. note on l. 25.

107. *romage*, i.e. making 'room' for - clearing out (of stores).

108. *be*. Bernardo's opinion is much the same as Horatio's; but the subjunctive *be* expresses less certainty than the indicative *is* would have expressed. Cf. note on l. 28. For *but*= 'than', cf. 'no more but that', and see lines 100 and 102 above.

109. *sort* is a Romance word, derived from the root of *sero* 'I join'; and here the word is used in the parallel sense of 'suit'. "The fact that this ominous figure comes through our watch in armour, *suits* your theory, for the king was and is the cause of these wars."

112. *mote*, i.e. a very small thing. Cf. *S. Matthew* vii. 3.

114. *mightiest*. There were a whole tribe who owned the name of *Julius*; but the superlative is one of excellence, not of comparison.

115. *sheeted*, i.e. in winding-sheets.

116. *gibber* is a frequentative of the Celtic *gab* 'a mouth', from which both *gabble* and *gabble* are probably derived.

117. *as*. A line has apparently fallen out of the text here. It must have been to this purport:—"And there were other terrible sights, such as comets."

118. *disasters* are literally 'evil stars' (Gk. *dis-asteris*), i.e. 'evil influences'. 'The moon is called 'the moist star' because of her influence on the tides; Neptune's empire 'stands upon', i.e. 'depends on', what 'flows in' from her.

120. *to doomsday*, i.e. 'in a manner suitable to'. See *S. Matthew* xxiv. 29.

121. *precursor*=fore-runner.

122. *harbingers*. Literally, a harbinger is one who goes before to prepare lodgings or shelter (harbourage) for those who are coming.

still, from its root sense of 'unmovedly', was used by Shakespeare in the general sense of 'always'. Cf. ii. 2. 42.

123. omen stands here for 'the calamity foretold by the omen'. A somewhat similar transference of meaning has taken place in the words *text* and *note*. Cf. 'trumpet' for 'trumpeter' in l. 150 below.

125. climates, *i.e.* simply 'climate', 'country'.

129. speak to me. The broken lines in this speech are quite in keeping with the occasion, for Horatio—though no longer in the state of fear into which the first appearance of the ghost threw him—is labouring under intense excitement. He has talked over with his friends in the meantime several reasons—historical and practical—for the ghost's appearance; and he now boldly appeals to it by its hopes of peace, its love for Denmark, and its desire to make restitution to any whom it has wronged.

131. foreknowing. 'Foreknowledge of which may, by good fortune, enable us to avoid it.' If the *which* is taken closely with *foreknowing* and supplied again after the verb *avoid*, then *foreknowing* is a gerund governing *which* like a verb, as all gerunds govern; but, if the *which* is taken with the verb, then *foreknowing* is a verbal noun, and, as such, need not take any case after it. Gerunds must either take a case after them, or be modified by an adverb. Cf. note on ii. 2. 364.

136. uphoarded. Separable particles have usually variable meanings according as they are prefixes and compounded or suffixes and separate. For instance, *to upset* and *to overlook* are not the same as *to set up* and *to look over*. Here, however, *uphoarded* has exactly the same meaning as *hoarded up*. The word *hoard* is connected with the root of *house*. 'If, during your life, you have stored away in the earth treasure unjustly wrung from others (which you wish restored that you may rest in your grave in peace).'

140. partizan, *i.e.* spear.

144. show, *i.e.* demonstration.

146. malicious. *Malice* is a doublet of *malevolence*, *i.e.* 'evil-wishing'. They can only offer it an empty ap-

pearance of violence, though their intention is evil enough; and thus their attempt only becomes a subject for ridicule.

149. summons is a singular noun, French *sumonce*.

150. trumpet. See note on l. 123.

154. extravagant has now been restricted to '*wandering beyond the bounds of economy*'; but here, like *erring*, it is used in its strict root meaning. There are many instances of this Law of Restriction, *e.g.* *girl*, *hoyden*, and *stut* have been restricted to females; *acre*, *furlong*, and *foot*, to particular measures.

hies, *i.e.* *hastens*.

155. confine, *i.e.* place of confinement.

156. probation ('proof') is *four* syllables. Contrast *spirits* in l. 138 above and l. 161 below.

157. faded conveys the idea of its intangible character.

158. 'against. Any preposition can be converted into a conjunction by the insertion of a suppressed relative and its antecedent, *e.g.* here 'against (the time that) that season comes'.

160. bird of dawning, *i.e.* the cock. Cf. l. 150.

162. strike, like *takes* in the next line, is used in a peculiar 'magical' sense.

163. takes, *i.e.* enchants, cf. the slung use of 'taking'.

167. walks Cf. "the floods *clap* their hands".

168. break we, *i.e.* (I advise that) we break.

170. young Hamlet. This introduces the central figure in the tragedy, and puts him at once in a forced relation to his dead father. That Hamlet was slightly built, as well as young, may be inferred from his own words below, i. 2. 153.

172. consent. *That* is sometimes omitted before *shall* and before a subjunctive mood.

173. loves. When an abstract noun refers to several persons, it is sometimes inflected for plural by Elizabethan writers.

Act I.—Scene 2.

The King's speech is divided into two distinct parts. The first part refers to his marriage with Gertrude, his dead brother's widow; and its affected language marks the mental strain of the murderer; the second part refers to matters of state, and is straightforward and dignified.

1. Hamlet our dear brother's is one compound noun. *Hamlet's*, with *our-dear-brother's* in apposition, would have been more emphatic; but the king does not wish to emphasize the name, and the construction would have been cumbersome, as the noun in apposition has several words with it.

2. *be*, as a subjunctive mood, expresses the speaker's view of a 'fact', with a suggestion of a negative. For instance, 'wherever he *be*' = 'he is *not* here' + 'I do *not* know where he is'; 'O that he *were* here' = 'he is *not* here' + 'I *want* him'.

that repeats the *though*, cf. *que* in French. This use of the word as an enclitic was originally confined to interrogatives—*when? who? why?*—where it was added to make them *relatives*. Then it came to be used with other classes of words by false analogy.

besotted. The indicative assertion expresses the obvious opinion of his hearers in contrast to the *be* of his own heart.

4. one brow of woe, *i.e.* a united expression of sorrow. *Brow of woe* = 'woeful brow', a very common construction in Shakespeare. Cf. 'waste of shame' = 'shameful waste', 'property of easiness' (v. i. 66).

5. *nature*, *i.e.* natural feeling.

6. *wisent*, because 'we' have no right to forget ourselves and the state.

8. *sometime*, 'formerly', an adverb used for an adjective. Contrast "*bitter cold*", i. i. 7.

9. *jointress*, *i.e.* joint possessor.

10. *defeated* = *disheated*, *i.e.* *marred*.

11. 'With *one* eye cheerful, and *one* sorrowful'. Cf. '*an ounce*', '*a pound*'.

12. The Greek name for this construction is *oxymoron*, *i.e.* 'a bitter sweet'. Tennyson writes:—"And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true".

13. *dole* is connected with the Latin *doleo* 'I weep', not with the English *deal*.

14. *to wife*, cf. *S. Matt.* iii. 9, "We have Abraham to father".

barr'd, *i.e.* opposed, excluded.

15. *wisdoms*, cf. 'loves', i. i. 172.

15, 16. *gone along with*, *i.e.* approved of.

17. *that* = *that which*. The relative is seldom omitted when the demonstrative is expressed.

18. 'Having a poor opinion of our strength'. *Weak* really qualifies *worth*, not *supposal*. He held his 'supposal' strongly, or he would not have acted on it. A 'supposal' is an 'unfounded opinion'.

20. *disjoint*. The final *t* of the present tense is made to do duty for the *t* or *ed* which ought to be added to form the weak past participle. This is sometimes found, especially in Shakespeare, even when the present tense ends in *te*, not simple *t*, *e.g.* *degenerate*.

21. *colleagu'd* with goes closely after *supposal*. 'Having a poor opinion of our strength *added* to a dream of conquest'.

22. *he* is superfluous in grammar; but the real nominative to *hath*—*young Fortinbras*—is so far off that its repetition by *he* makes the sense clearer.

23, 24. 'Referring to the surrender of these lands (which were) *legally* lost by his father'. *With*, *i.e.* 'according to'.

27. *writ*, *i.e.* written. See note on l. 20 above and l. 29 below.

28. *Norway*, cf. i. i. 60.

29. *Impotent*, *i.e.* sick. Cf. *Acts* iv. 9. *bed-ridden*. Cf. note on l. 20 above; but *ridden* is, of course, a strong past participle.

31. *gait*, *i.e.* 'going on', or '*getting on*'. The word is derived from *get*, not from *go*.

In that goes with *writ*—'We have writ to Norway (bidding him) to suppress . . . *because* the levying of money, the enlistment of soldiers, and the complete equipment are made entirely from among his subjects'.

33. **subject**—a collective noun.

35. **for**, *i.e.* as, cf. *S. Luke xi. 12*, "for a fish".

37. **to business**—a noun used as a verb; cf. "to shark up", *l. 1. 98*.

more is redundant after *further*.

38. **delated**, *i.e.* 'handed over to you' (Latin *deferro*).

allow is a subjunctive. In the meantime the two men did *not* know what the articles allowed. Cf. note on *be*, *l. 2* above.

39. 'Let your haste win our approval of your loyalty.'

41. **nothing** is used adverbially, =not, 'in no degree'.

42. **news**, like *odds*, was originally an adjective inflected for plural and then used as a noun in the singular.

44. **you**='a man'.
of reason, in reason.

The Dane, cf. *l. 1. 15*.

45. **lose your voice**, *i.e.* ask in vain, cf. *l. 118* below.

thou is more personal and more friendly than *you* when used to *friends*.

47. **native**, *i.e.* necessary, or closely related.

48. **instrumental**, *i.e.* useful, or subservient.

49. What he *means* is that Polonius is necessary and useful to him as king; what he *says* is that he as king is closely related to or dependent on and subservient to Polonius.

50. **dread my lord**. The possessive adjective stands in this peculiar position either (1) because it was used so often with such words as *lord*, *lady*, *sir*, &c., that the two words came to be treated as a compound noun, cf. *mon-sieur* and *ma-dame*; or (2) to emphasize the *dread*. Cf. *l. 3. 46*.

51. **your leave and favour**, *i.e.* 'your kind leave', &c., an instance of hendiadys. Cf. *l. 1. 68*.

52. **from whence**. Either the preposition or the suffix is redundant.

53. **In**, *i.e.* 'by being present at'.

55. **them**. The personal pronouns originally did not need to be compounded with *self* to have a reflexive sense. Cf. "I repent *me* of having chosen Israel", "Get *thee* to bed" (*l. 1. 6*), "Let every soldier hew *him* down a bough".

56. **leave and pardon** is a case of bilingualism, or two-tonguedness, *leave* being English and *pardon* being Latin. Cf. note on *l. 1. 99*. The *per* in *perdonare* adds the idea of 'complete and free giving', as in *perjurare* it adds that of 'hard swearing'.

58. **slow leave**, cf. 'weak supposal' in *l. 18* above, and 'hard consent' below.

59. **laboursome** is a hybrid, *labour* being Latin and *-some* being English. The proper Latin word is *laborious*; the proper English word is *toilsome*.

60. 'I put the seal of my consent, though it was won with difficulty, upon his wishes'.

62. **fair hour**, favourable opportunity.

64. **cousin**, from its root meaning (Latin *consanguineus* 'a blood relation'), could be applied to a *nephew*.

65. He was more than an ordinary kinsman, for he was stepson as well as nephew; but he was far from feeling kindly towards his 'stepfather uncle'.

67. There is a punning reference in *sun* to *son* in *l. 63*.

68. **nighted**, cf. note on *l. 37* above. Hamlet's first appearance on the scene, dressed in black and with eyes cast down, is suggestive of the coming tragedy.

70. **veiled lids**. 'Veiling lids' would be more accurate; it was the eye that was veiled—by the eyelids.

72. **all that lives**, *i.e.* everything that ever has life.

73. **nature**, *i.e.* (human) existence.

75. **particular with thee**, *i.e.* 'so special in your case'.

76. Contrast this outburst (as the word *seems*) with Hamlet's previous "Ay, madam, it is common". The outburst draws attention to his neglect of external things. The words, though courteous enough in form, must have galled his mother; and they drew from the king the long pedantic speech to which Hamlet makes no answer.

77. **Inky**, *i.e.* 'black as ink'. 'It is not the deep dye of my cloak, nor even the sombre appearance of the usual mourning apparel, nor the breaking forth of heavy sighs, nor the abun-

- dant flow of tears, nor the forlorn and downcast expression of the countenance, nor any of the forms and fashions, fits and starts of grief, that can truly set forth my feelings.
81. *haviour* is the manner which a person *has*.
84. *play*, and, therefore, deserve the word *'seems'*, cf. l. 76.
85. *passeth show*, i.e. is a *reality*, not merely an appearance. *Passeth* = surpasseth.
86. *these . . . suits*. 'These things (l. 77-81) are only external evidences of mourning'.
90. 'That lost father of *yours* lost *his* father, and the survivor (your father) was bound to mourn for some time'.
92. *obsequious* has its literal sense of *'following to the grave'*—'funereal'.
- persever* has the old spelling and the old accent.
93. *condolement* is simply a pompous word for 'grief', which betrays the king's self-conscious state of mind.
95. *incorrect to*, i.e. not correct in the sight of. Both *incorrect* and *unfortified* are rare and artificial words. Cf. 'condolement'.
97. *simple and unschool'd*, i.e. ignorant and undisciplined.
99. 'As any thing that is most commonly noticed.'
101. *to heaven*, i.e. towards—against heaven.
103. 'This long-continued obstinate grief of yours is most absurd when examined by the light of reason, which will tell you that the death of fathers is a common event (subject of observation): from the first death to that which has just now taken place, reason's cry has always been, *'All men must die'*'.
104. *who is for which*, as if Reason were a person.
- still*, i.e. always.
105. *till he*, supply *died*.
107. *unprevailing*, i.e. unavailing.
109. *mediate* (Latin *in*, 'not', and *medi*, 'middle'), without anyone between.
112. *impart*, supply the word *love* as the object.
- for your intent*, i.e. as for your intention of. Cf. l. 3. 5.
113. *school*, i.e. college; but, as the University of Wittenberg was not founded till 1502, this is an anachronism. See 'cannon', l. 126 below.
114. *retrograde to* is simply an affected way of saying 'contrary to'.
115. *you*, i.e. yourself. See note on l. 1. 6.
117. 'Quite the chief of those at court, —my kinsman—my nearest kinsman —my heir.'
118. *lose*. Cf. note on l. 45 above.
120. 'I shall obey you to the utmost in everything.'
124. 'Sits close to my heart and pleases me; and, in proof, I will have a cannon fired every time I drink a health to-day.'
125. *Denmark*. Cf. l. 1. 48.
126. *cannon* were not invented till the beginning of the 14th century.
127. *rouse*, i.e. deep draughts. The word is said to come from the Danish *ros*, 'a beaker of wine'. In Shakespeare's time the Danes were notorious as the most intemperate people in Europe.
- bruit*, i.e. noise abroad.
132. *canon*, i.e. religious law.
- N. B.* The idea of suicide has, therefore, already occurred to him.
134. *uses*, i.e. customs, ways.
137. *merely*, i.e. entirely.
- 139, 140. 'He was to my uncle as the sun-god is to a grotesque being, half man and half goat.'
141. *might not beseem*, 'could not allow'.
142. *Visit*. *To* is neither a necessary sign nor an essential part of the infinitive, though the infinitive is now used much more commonly with it than without it, except after such verbs as *shall*, *will*, *can*, *do*, *let*, &c.
146. The philosopher generalizes at once from the single instance of his mother's frailty.
147. *or ere*. One of the words is redundant, as *or* is simply another form of *ere*, cf. *an if*. *Or*, the alternative conjunction, is connected with *either* (wise).
149. *Niotha* was the daughter of Tantalus, King of Lydia. She was so proud of her large family that she jeered at Latona for having only two children, Apollo and Diana. In revenge, Apollo slew all her sons, and

- Diana slew all her daughters. This awful blow smote her dumb with grief, and eventually turned her into 'stone'.
150. wants discourse, *i.e.* 'does not possess the power of discursive reasoning'—which implies 'choice'.
153. Hercules was the 'Samson' of the Greeks. Hamlet's words imply that he was small and weak compared with his father.
155. left the flushing of, *i.e.* left off causing her to flush.
157. In Elizabethan, as still in provincial English, two negatives strengthen one another, instead of, as in Latin, contradicting one another.
160. do can now be used as an auxiliary (with the infinitive) only, (1) with a negative—'I do not know'; (2) in questions—'Do you know?'; (3) for emphasis—'I do know'.
162. change, *i.e.* exchange. 'In my circumstances I am your poor servant.'
163. make, *i.e.* do.
166. Supply *make* in another sense—'developing a truant disposition':
170. that=such.
173. affair, *i.e.* business.
178. upon is here an adverb, or supply *it* (*i.e.* the funeral).
181. dearest is used simply with an intensive force—*i.e.* greatest—what touches the heart most closely, whether pleasure or pain.
182. or ever. Cf. note on l. 147.
183. methinks. The verb 'to think' had originally two forms, one active—'to consider'—and the other neuter—'to seem', and the latter survives in 'methinks', *i.e.* '(To) me (it) seems'.
189. who is for 'whom', as often in Shakespeare.
191. season. 'Keep till the right time'—control.
- admiration has its literal meaning of 'wonder' (Latin *admirari*).
192. attent=attentive.
- may has its literal meaning of 'can'. Cf. *might* and *main*.
194. God's is a subjective genitive in form, though probably objective in sense—'your love towards God'.
197. vast is a noun—a doublet of 'waste', 'desert'.
199. at point, *i.e.* at every point.
- cap-à-pô=French *cap-à-pied*, 'from head to foot'.
201. slow and stately are either adjectives used adverbially, or agree with 'figure'.
203. truncheon, *i.e.* 'a staff', especially 'of authority'. The word is connected with *trunk*.
- distill'd almost, *i.e.* almost melted.
204. with the act, *i.e.* by the effect.
205. stand. The present tense makes it more vivid.
206. dreadful, *i.e.* 'awe-struck', not 'awe-striking'. Cf. 'sensible' in l. 1. 57, and 'plausive' in l. 4. 30. Many adjectives, especially those ending in *-full* and *-less*, have both an active and a passive sense.
208. 'And there, exactly as they had told their story, both as to the time and as to the form of the apparition.'
210. comes. Cf. note on *stand*, above.
211. 'My right hand is not more like my left hand than the apparition was like your father.'
214. methought. Cf. note on l. 183 above.
215. It was used as the neuter genitive before *its* was introduced, which was about Shakespeare's time. In Old English the neuter nominative was *hit*, and the neuter genitive was *his*. The latter is found very often in the Authorized Version of the Bible (1611 A.D.).
216. like as=just as if.
- would is the past tense of *will*—'wished'. Cf. l. 1. 45.
217. loud is an adjective used adverbially. Cf. l. 202 above.
221. writ. Cf. note on l. 1. 45. See l. 1. 173.
225. arm'd refers to the apparition.
229. beaver was the part of the helmet which could be raised to allow the wearer to drink. (Latin *bibo*.)
234. constantly, *i.e.* steadily.
236. like is an adjective used adverbially. Cf. l. 217 above. As the suffix *-ly* is itself a corruption of *like*, the word *likely* is an anomalous form.
237. tell, *i.e.* count. Cf. "the tale of the bricks", *Exodus* v. 8.
241. sable is a noun used as an adjective.

tive. The sable is an animal of the weasel kind, which is found in northern latitudes, and which is prized for its glossy, dark fur.

242. *gape*, *i.e.* open its mouth.

247. *tenable*=‘held’. Cf. note on ‘dreadful’ in l. 206 above.

248. *hap*=happen.

249. ‘Notice it, but don’t mention it.’

250. *loves*. Cf. note on i. r. 173.

Act I.—Scene 3.

2. *as*, *i.e.* according as.

3. *convoy*, *i.e.* means of conveying safely.

5. *for*, *i.e.* as for. Cf. note on l. 2. 112.

6. *fashion*, *i.e.* the fancy of the moment.

toy in blood, *i.e.* a child’s natural plaything.

7. *primy*, *i.e.* early spring.

9. *perfume and suppliance* is an instance of hendiadys—‘that which supplies a pleasant scent for a moment’.

10. but *so*, *i.e.* than so much. Cf. i. r. 108.

11. *crescent*, *i.e.* when it is growing. (Latin *cresco*.)

12. *thews*, *i.e.* sinews.

temple, *i.e.* of the body. Cp. *S. John* ii. 21.

14. *withal*, *i.e.* along with it.

15. ‘Nothing that can sully or deceive (*cautel*) stains his virtuous intentions.’

17. *his greatness weigh’d*, *i.e.* taking into consideration his high rank.

18. *subject to his birth*, *i.e.* must consult the dignity of the position which he inherits.

19. *unvalued*, *i.e.* not valued so highly.

20. *carve*, *i.e.* choose.

21. *safety must be pronounced with three syllables*.

23. ‘By what the state says and will yield to.’

26. *as*, *i.e.* according as—so far as. Cf. l. 2 above.

particular, *i.e.* definite, precise.

27. *may*, *i.e.* can. Cf. i. r. 56.

28. *withal*. Cf. l. 14 above.

30. *credent*=credulous.

list his songs. The preposition is often omitted by Shakespeare between a verb of hearing and the thing heard.

32. *importunity*, *i.e.* urgent request.

39. ‘The canker-worm too often frets the tender plants of Spring before the buds are opened.’

40. *button* is connected with the same root as *bud*.

42. *blastments*—‘blights’—is a hybrid, having a Latin suffix *-ment* attached to the English *blast*.

43. *best*. The omission of *the* before superlatives may be due to their double meaning—‘the best’ and ‘very good’.

44. *to itself* may mean either ‘against itself’ or ‘if left to itself’.

none near. Supply *be*.

46. *as watchman*. In Shakespeare’s time the *a* had so much of its original sense of ‘one’ that it was too emphatic to be used in an adverbial phrase.

good my brother. Cf. note on i. 2. 50.

47. *ungracious*, *i.e.* graceless.

49. *whiles* is simply the genitive of *while*—‘at the time that’.

puff’d, *i.e.* with pride, or ‘bloated’.

himself, *i.e.* each of the ‘pastors’.

50. *primrose path of dalliance*, *i.e.* the path of trifling in his early youth.

51. *hecks*... *rede*, *i.e.* ‘heeds not his own counsel’.

me is dative, ‘for me’.

54. ‘I have a favourable opportunity for taking leave of my father a second time.’

56. *sits in*, *i.e.* blows steadily on.

57. *character*, *i.e.* ‘engrave’—the literal meaning of the original Greek word.

60. *unproportion’d*, *i.e.* immature, or unsuitable.

his=*its*. Cf. note on i. 2. 215.

61. *vulgar*, *i.e.* ‘common’—‘Don’t make yourself cheap.’

62. and..tried, *i.e.* 'and that after having tested your choice by experience'.

adoption tried is a nominative absolute, *i.e.* really a compressed adverbial (of time) sentence. In Old English this construction of the noun and participle, grammatically independent of the rest of the sentence, was put in the *dative*,—in Latin in the *ablative*,—in Greek in the *genitive*.

N.B. The participle very rarely precedes the noun, but cf. '*given* fair-play'.

64. 'Do not make your hand-shake of welcome lose its freshness by entertaining too freely.'

66. of entrance. For the omission of *the*, as being too emphatic, cf. note on l. 46 above.

67. bear 't, *i.e.* conduct the quarrel.

69. censure has its literal sense of 'opinion'. (Latin *censeo* 'I think'.)

70. habit, *i.e.* dress, as still in 'riding-habit'.

71. 'Let the price be shown not in the fanciful and gaudy pattern, but in the richness of the material.'

74. 'Are at once most particular and most free in their expenditure on that special point.'

The grammar of this line is inexplicable. Perhaps *chief* ought to be *choice*. As it stands, *chief* must be taken as an adverb and some phrase like 'turn of mind' must be supplied with the adjectives *select* and *generous*. It has been suggested that *of a* should be left out altogether,—which certainly makes the sense quite easy.

76. loan. See note on l. 46 above.

77. husbandry, *i.e.* economy—literally 'household-management'.

81. season. 'May my blessing cause this advice to *season* or *influence* your conduct.'

82. tend, *i.e.* attend.

89. so please you, *i.e.* if it so please you.

90. Marry is a corruption of 'By Mary', *i.e.* 'By S. Mary the Virgin'.

bethought, *i.e.* thought of.

92. of your audience is a genitive of reference—'in regard to'.

94. be. The subjunctive implies *ignorance* on the part of the speaker.

put on, *i.e.* put *to*—explained to.

101. green is allied to *grow*, and therefore means 'young' and so 'inexperienced'.

102. unsifted, *i.e.* inexperienced. *Circumstance* is used here in the singular as a collective noun.

104. should, *i.e.* ought to.

106. that, *i.e.* in that—'because'.

107. tender yourself more dearly, *i.e.* don't make yourself so cheap.

108. crack the wind—the metaphor is from a broken-winded horse.

109. tender..fool, *i.e.* make a fool of me.

112. fashion is used by Polonius in its bad sense, but Ophelia had used it simply in the sense of 'way'.

go to. In Shakespeare's time *go* implied merely 'motion', not necessarily 'motion *from*'; and so *to* could be used with it—'Come, come'. There may, however, be an ellipse of some such words as are found in a slang expression—'Go to *Bath*'.

113. countenance, *i.e.* appearance (of reality).

114. with, *i.e.* with 'the aid of'—by.

115. springes, *i.e.* snares with a *spring*-mouse.

woodcocks were in Shakespeare's time supposed to have no brains, because they were so easily snared.

do know. Cf. note on l. 2. 160.

116. prodigal is an adjective used as an adverb.

117. 'You must not consider these flashes of affection—which have more of the appearance than the genuine reality of warmth, and which lose both the appearance and the reality while they seem to promise most—as the flames of deep, true love.'

119. a-making. The preposition *a* is a corruption of *an*, and the adjective *a* a corruption of *one*.

Making must be a verbal noun, not a gerund, as it neither governs a case nor is modified by an adverb.

121. something is used adverbially—'in some degree'. Cf. *nothing* in l. 2. 41.

of. Cf. note on l. 92 above.

122. 'Do not allow yourself to be addressed by everyone who demands a hearing.'

122. *your* is subjective in form, but objective in sense—'invitation sent to (not by) you'.

entreatments. For the plural cf. note on i. 1. 173.

123. *parley* is literally 'to discuss terms of peace'. (Fr. *parler* 'to speak'.)

for, i.e. as for. Cf. i. 2. 112.

126. *in few*. Supply *words*. Adjectives are often thus used for nouns in Shakespeare. Cf. 'for all' in i. 1. 131 below.

127. *brokers*, i.e. negotiators.

128. 'Not of the true colour which their outward appearance would suggest.'

investments, i.e. clothing. Cf. 'entreatments' above.

129. *Implores*=*implorers*. 'You are like a man who receives written promises in payment instead of good money.' Sterling money means standard coin of true weight and fineness, and is said to be derived from the Esterlings or Kasterlings,

German merchants from the Hanse Towns, who in King John's reign first coined pure money.

130. 'Sounding like the words of one whose troth is pledged with sacred vows.'

the is the ablative of the demonstrative—'by that'.

131. *for all*=in short. Cf. i. 1. 126 above. *Once* might be supplied before the *for*.

132. *would* is literally the past tense of *to wish* (will), and is used thus in English as an optative.

133. *slander*, i.e. 'abuse', or 'mis-use', is an infinitive.

moment is for *moment's*. The omission of the sign of the genitive is quite common, especially with proper names. Compare 'heart's-ease' with 'heart-ache'.

Cf. 'Lethe wharf', i. 5. 33; and 'the region kites', ii. 2. 552.

135. *come your ways*, i.e. Come along. The *s* is probably the genitive inflection of the noun—used adverbially. Cf. 'any ways afflicted'.

Act I.—Scene 4.

This conversation about the weather and the time is most characteristic of men whose minds are trying to escape from one all-absorbing thought.

1. *shrewdly*, i.e. keenly.

2. *eager*, i.e. sharp. (Latin *acer* 'sharp'. Cf. *vinegar* 'sharp-wine'.)

3. *lacks of*, i.e. is deficient off.

4. *is struck*. Cf. notes on i. 1. 5, and on i. 1. 39.

5. *It draws*. *It*=the time.

6. *held his wont*, i.e. has been in the habit of. *Wont* is really an adjective (*wonted*) used as a noun. Cf. 'held his own'.

8. *doth*. Cf. note on i. 2. 160.

wake, i.e. keep a 'watch-night' feast.

rouse. Cf. note on i. 2. 127.

9. *wassail* was literally *was hail*, 'be healthy'. Then it came to mean generally 'a drinking-bout'.

up-spring is said to mean 'a riotous German dance', in which case *reels* must mean 'makes the dancers reel'; but surely *up-spring*=*up-start*, and refers to the king. There

may be also the idea that 'as he springs up (in his place to propose a toast) he reels'.

10. *Rhenish*, i.e. Rhenish wine. Cf. notes on i. 6 above, and on i. 3. 126.

12. *triumph of his pledge*, i.e. triumphant reception of the health he has pledged.

16. *born*, i.e. accustomed from birth.

17. *east and west* practically means 'in all directions'. In *sense* the words follow 'nations'.

18. *traduced and tax'd*, i.e. slandered and censured—'blamed deservedly and even more than we deserve'.

19. *clepe*=call.

'And sully our title of 'drunkard' further by offensive charges of gluttony.'

swinish phrase, i.e. by calling us swine. Cf. note on 'slow leave', i. 2. 58.

21. *at height*, i.e. however noble.

22. 'The best part of the good that is attributed to us.'

24. mole of nature, *i.e.* inherited blemish. Cf. l. 40 below.

26. his=*its*. Cf. i. 2. 215.

27. 'By the excess of some natural habit.'

complexion (Latin *complexio* 'physical structure of body'), a 'congenital defect'. 'The ancients believed that the disposition depended upon the temperament or due intermixture (complexion or interweaving) of 'humours' of the body—blood, phlegm, and bile, especially: an excess of any one of these humours made a man of sanguinary, phlegmatic, choleric, or melancholy complexion. The term is now employed for the complicated effect of the disposition on the countenance.'

28. pales, *i.e.* palisade.

29. o'er-leavens, &c. 'Taints them through and through with an acquired habit of unmannerliness.'

30. plausible is literally 'praiseworthy'.

31-34. 'Carrying the deep impress of that one defect, whether it is an inherited defect or the result of an accident,—their virtues being otherwise free from all blemish and human limitation.'

35. shall, *i.e.* are sure to.

condemne, *i.e.* opinion. Cf. i. 3. 69. N.B. The construction of this passage (ll. 23-36) is ungrammatical. *That* in l. 24 is taken up by *that* in l. 30, and *these men* in l. 30 is replaced by *their virtues* in l. 34.

36. 'The small admixture of ale makes all that is really good in the character a matter for doubt, and so brings it into ill-repute altogether.'

ale = ale. Hamlet obviously means *evil* (=evil), but is punning on the subject of conversation, which is the *drinking* habits of the Danes.

37. 'This line is probably corrupt. Perhaps 'of a' ought to be 'offer'.

40. be (as *being* and *be* below) is subjunctive, the position of the verb before the subject accounting for the omission of the conjunction (*whether*).

spirit of health, *i.e.* healed spirit, opposed to the goblin. For this use of the genitive cf. note on l. 24 above and on i. 2. 4.

43. questionable, *i.e.* inviting question.

47. canonized...hearsed is a sort of hendiadys, 'buried with sacred rites'. Cf. note on i. 3. 9. Shakespeare always accents *canonized* on the second syllable.

48. cerements (Latin *cera* 'wax') are the *waxed* shrouds in which the dead were wrapt.

49. inurn'd, *i.e.* buried. An urn, as a symbol or ornament of a tomb, speaks of a time when bodies were cremated.

50. oped=opened.

51. may here has its literal sense of 'can'. Cf. i. 1. 56.

52. This and the following lines are a noun in apposition to *this* in l. 51.

complete, when accented on the first syllable, seems always to come before its noun.

53. 'Appearest thus by the fitful light of the moon.'

54. and we. After a conjunction and before an infinitive Shakespeare often puts a nominative when we should put an objective. The explanation of this seems to be that the conjunction is looked upon as introducing a perfectly *new* sentence, and not as simply adding another clause. Here—'we are made the sport of nature'.

55. to shake our disposition, *i.e.* by shaking our mental constitution.

56. reaches, *i.e.* grasp Cf. note on i. 1. 173.

57. why refers to the past—'in consequence of what?'; *wherefore* refers to the future—'for what purpose?' should, *i.e.* ought.

59. impartment, *i.e.* to make communication.

61. removed—from the public, *i.e.* secret.

63. The first *will* implies simply 'willingness', the second implies 'determination'.

64. should be here is nearly='could there be'; and the root meaning of *should*, as the *past* tense of *shall*, is probably involved in Hamlet's reference to what they *had* (just) said.

65. a pin's fee, *i.e.* the price of one pin.

66. for, *i.e.* as for. Cf. i. 2. 112 and i. 5. 153.

68. forth, *i.e.* farther (from you).
 69. the flood. This is either the 'generic' use of the definite article, or cf. note on i. 1. 15.
 71. beetles, *i.e.* leans over.
 his=its. Cf. note on i. 2. 216.
 73. deprive—'take away'—does not need *of* before an impersonal object, especially when—as here—the person is also omitted.
 your sovereignty of reason, *i.e.* the controlling power of your reason. Cf. 'a pin's fee' in i. 65 above.
 75. toys of desperation, *i.e.* desperate fancies. Cf. i. 40 above.
 77. looks=looks down.

82. 'Even my blood-vessels as hard as the sinews of the Nemean lion.' *Nemea* was the name of a rock in the Peloponnese near which Hercules strangled a gigantic lion.
 85. lets, *i.e.* makes late—'hinders'.
 87. 'His thoughts give him the strength of madness or despair.'
 89. have after, *i.e.* Let us take ourselves after. *Have* is connected with the Latin *capio* 'I take'. Cf. 'have at him'.
 91. It is the issue.
 nay either refers to 'tis not fit' in l. 88, or has—as very often—the meaning 'not only so'.

Act I.—Scene 5:

1. further ought to be *farther*. *Further* is the comparative of *forth*; *far* makes *farther*, into which the *-th* was introduced by false analogy with *further*. *Farther* ought always to be used of actual distance.
 4. render, *i.e.* give back—Latin *re* and *do*.
 6. shall, *i.e.* am about to.
 bound—'ready'—is the past participle of an old verb *buan*, 'to prepare'; but the Ghost understands it as the past participle of 'to bind', as is also implied in the 'shall'.
 10. term, *i.e.* limited time (Latin *terminus* 'a boundary').
 walk the night. Cf. note on i. 1. 27.
 11. for the day, *i.e.* during the day, but the *for* has literally much the same meaning as in i. 1. 66.
 the is 'generic', cf. note on i. 4. 69.
 12. days of nature. Cf. note on i. 2. 73.
 13. but that, *i.e.* except for the fact that.
 forbid for *forbidden* is due to the tendency to drop the *en* inflection of the verb whenever the omission of it does not lead to confusion, *e.g.* between the pres. indic. and the infinitive.
 15. whose, *i.e.* of which. Contrast 'Our Father *which*'. *Who* was formerly used where we now use *which* (even of inanimate objects), and *vice versa*.
 17. spheres, *i.e.* sockets.

18. to part, although the *to* was omitted with *start*.
 20. porpentine is Shakespeare's regular way of spelling *porcupine*. (Latin *porcus-spina* 'a thorny-hog').
 21. eternal blazon, *i.e.* awful proclamation, a disclosure. *Eternal* is used very commonly in this sense both in the east of England and in America.
 27. In the best, *i.e.* even when viewed in the best light.
 29. haste me, *i.e.* do not keep me waiting.
 swift as meditation, *i.e.* quick as thought.
 31. sweep is simply a doublet of *swoop*.
 apt, *i.e.* quick—to understand and to undertake my commission.
 32. shouldst, *i.e.* wouldst have to be. Cf. note on i. 4. 64.
 fat=rank.
 33. Lethe wharf, *i.e.* the bank of the river of Forgetfulness (in Hades). For the construction cf. note on i. 3. 133.
 34. wouldst, *i.e.* if thou wert not willing. The omission of the *if* is comparatively rare when the conditional clause comes second. See also note on i. 4. 40.
 36. whole ear of Denmark, *i.e.* ear of all Denmark.
 37. process is the legal word for 'narrative'.
 38. abused, *i.e.* deceived.

- 40 prophetic. Cf. note on i. 2. 65.
 42. methinks. Cf. note on i. 2. 183.
 43. sleeping must grammatically agree with *me* in *my* (=of *me*).
 44. of is used as a preposition for 'time'. Cf. 'of old', 'of late'.
 45. secure obviously does not mean 'safe', but 'careless'—'unguarded'. (Latin *sine-cura*.)
 46. hebenon, i.e. *hen-bane*—the stinking nightshade, which is *baneful* to *souls*.
 47. porches, i.e. openings.
 48. leperous distilment, i.e. contagious essence. Leprosy was considered the most loathsome of contagious diseases.
 whose=of which. Cf. l. 15 above.
 49. For the omission of *the* before *blood* cf. note on i. 3. 66.
 51. *alleys* are literally 'canals', the word being connected through the French *aller* 'to go' with the Latin *admare* 'to go to by water'.
 52. posset—'hot milk curdled with wine or acid'—and curd are nouns used as verbs.
 53. eager, i.e. 'sour'. Cf. note on i. 4. 2.
 54. thin=*not* curdled.
 55. tetter, i.e. eruption.
 barked about, i.e. grew like a bark over. This is another instance of a noun used as a verb. The ordinary verb *to bark* means 'to strip off the bark', not 'to cover with bark'. Cf. l. 52.
 56. lazar-like, i.e. leper-like. The word was derived from *Lazarus* (S. Luke xvi.), and was corrupted into *Lizard* in the name *Lizard Point*, where there was formerly a *Lazar-etto* for the reception of cases of leprosy from homeward-bound vessels.
 59. of has its literal sense of 'off'=from.
 dispatch has also its literal sense of 'remove as an obstacle'. (Latin *dispedicare* 'to unfetter'.)
 60. 'Cut off even before my sins had brought their just fruit in this life.'
 61. 'Without the Sacrament, without due preparation (appointments), and without being anointed by the oil of Extreme Unction.'
 62. reckoning, i.e. attempt to 'settle'

- up'. For the grammar cf. note on i. 3. 62.
 65. nature, i.e. natural feeling.
 66. 'In whatever way you follow up this act, to avenge it.'
 70. fare thee well. *Thee* ought to be *thou*, but it might be taken as a dative after *fare-well*.
 71. matin—'morning'—is an adjective used as a noun. Supply *hour*.
 72. pale is an intransitive verb used transitively
 uneffectual is a hybrid. 'The prefix *un* is Teutonic, while *effect* is Romance.'
 73. adieu is really two words, *à Dieu*—'I commend you to God'.
 76. instant is an adjective used for an adverb.
 79. globe, i.e. either 'his head' or 'the whole world'. The former is the more appropriate to Hamlet's feelings at the time, the latter to his usual philosophic habit of thought.
 80. table, i.e. tablet.
 81. fond, i.e. foolish.
 82. saw is a doublet of *saying*.
 pressures, i.e. impressions.
 83. youth and observation is another case of hendiadys—'youthful observation'. Cf. note on i. 4. 47.
 89. The old habit of making generalization from what he saw, is too strong for him even now.
 92. word, i.e. watchword.
 97. Hillo, ho, ho! was the cry used by a falconer to recall his hawk.
 100. Is't, i.e. How are things with you?
 101. good my lord. See note on i. 2. 50.
 103. once, i.e. ever.
 104, 105. 'There is not a rough unmannerly fellow in all Denmark who is not a cowardly rogue.'
 villain (Latin *villa* 'a farm') meant literally a 'country-fellow'. Cf. *pagán* (Latin *pagus* 'a village') and *heathen*—'one who lived on a heath'.
 106. needs, i.e. in need of.
 107. circumstance, i.e. circumlocution—'beating about the bush'.
 112. shall has an idea of compulsion in it which is explained by the next line.
 115. go pray. Cf. note on i. 2. 142.

116. *whirling*. The epithet is transferred from the brain to the product of the brain.
118. St. Patrick, a Scotch missionary in Ireland at the beginning of the 5th century, was said to have cleared the island of *snakes*, and Hamlet is apparently referring to this legend in connection with his father's words, l. 36-38 above.
121. *for*=as for. Cf. note on i. 2. 112.
124. 'Grant me one trifling request.'
128. *sword*, which was 'cross-hilted'.
131. *truepenny*, i.e. honest ghost—not a counterfeit.
138. *Hic et ubique*, i.e. here and everywhere.
144. *pioneer*=pioneer (Latin *pedo* 'a foot-soldier')—a foot-soldier whose duty it is to clear the way in front of an army.
145. *wondrous* is an adjective used for an adverb.
146. Cf. *Hebrews* xiii. 2.
149. *your* is not emphatic, but is used in a somewhat contemptuous general sense (=Latin *iste* 'that of yours'). Cf. iii. 2. 3. and iv. 3. 21.
153. *as*=for.
154. *antic*—'odd'—is a doublet of *antique*.
155. *that* depends on *swear* understood.
156. *encumbered* means literally

'heaped one on the other'—(Latin *convulsus* 'a heap')—'folded'.

156. *by pronouncing of*. *Pronouncing* must be a verbal noun, not a gerund, as it governs—like a noun—the genitive case.

157. *as*=such as.

an if. *An* is simply a broken form of 'and' (and = +, but = -); and *an if* means here 'if indeed'.

159. *that* is here used transitively.

160. *giving out*, i.e. exclamation.

to note. The *to* is superfluous—because *note* depends on *shall* in l. 155.

161. *of me*, i.e. either 'about me' or 'from me'.

162. *most* is used here as the superlative of 'great'. Cf. note on i. 3. 43.

166. *me*. The personal pronouns originally did not need to be compounded with *self* to have a reflexive sense. Cf. "Get thee hence", "Let every soldier hew *him* down a bough". The *self* only made the pronoun more emphatic—"I *myself* have said it".

168. *friending*=be-friending. Cf. *waiting* and *be-waiting*.

170. *lack*, i.e. be lacking.

171. *still*, i.e. always.

172. This summing up of the first act gives the key to the play. Hamlet receives from his father a task which he feels to be beyond his powers.

Act II.—Scene i.

This scene serves (1) as a short relief to the minds of the audience; (2) to show the rotten state of Danish society; (3) to admit us to the secret of the character of the practical Laertes as a foil to the dreamy Hamlet.

3. *shall* was originally a past tense and meant 'have owed', and therefore 'must pay (as soon as possible)'. Here it is used instead of *will* to convey an idea of obligation.

3. *marvellous* is an adjective used adverbially.

4. *inquire*=inquiry.

6. *Marry*, i.e. 'By Mary'.

7. *me* is the dative—generally called the ethic dative.

Danskere is the northern—i.e. the hard—form of *Danes*. Cf. *kirk* and *church*, *brig* and *bridge*.

8. *How* they live, *who* they are, *what* their fortune is, *where* they live, *who* are their companions, *what* state they keep up.

keep is still used in Cambridge for 'live' or 'lodge'.

10. This is another instance of hendiadys, and is very appropriate to the pedantic old time-server Polonius—"by the compass and general drift of these inquiries".

11. *do*. Cf. note on i. 2. 160.

more nearer is a *triple* comparative, for *nearer*=nigh-er-er. 'Find out by general questions whether they know my son; then go on to more particular questions; and from their answers guess even nearer to the truth than your particular ques-

- tions and their particular answers would seem to imply.
13. **take**, *i.e.* assume.
18. **he I mean**. For the suppression of the relative *cf.* i. 2. 17.
19. 'Then lay to his charge whatever faults you like to make-up for the occasion, so long as none are so gross.'
28. **as** may mean 'according as', or 'if', or 'because':—'because you may modify your accusation'.
31. 'Whisper his faults so astutely that they may seem merely blemishes due to newly-won freedom.'
34. 'A wildness in untamed 'young bloods' such as attacks every one of them.'
38. **fetch of warrant**, *i.e.* either 'a justifiable contrivance', or 'a contrivance that has proved effective'.
- 39-45. 'When you are making mention of these slight faults, just as you would speak of an article rather soiled with use, remember that if the person whom you are speaking to and want to sound, has ever seen him guilty of the fore-named crimes, he will follow up the conversation in this way.'
40. **you laying** is a nominative absolute. *Cf.* i. 3. 62.
42. **him** stands for *he whom*, the *he* being attracted into the objective case by the *whom* understood. *Cf.* i. 18 above.
43. **prenominate**—'afore-said'—is a participle. *Cf. deject* for *defected* in *ut.* i. 152.
45. **he** is redundant after *your party* above.
47. **addition**, *i.e.* title. *Cf.* note on i. 4. 19.
51. **leave**, *i.e.* leave off.
58. **a'** is either a corruption of *he*, which is still heard very commonly in conversation, or a corruption of *at* with *he* understood.
- o'ertook**=over-taken—by intoxication. *Cf.* note on i. 2. 127.
63. 'Thus we men of wisdom and foresight, by our winding ways and roundabout tests, get direct information by indirect means.'
- of wisdom** might possibly mean *by wisdom*.
64. **blas**. The metaphor is from the

- game of Bowls, the balls for which are weighted on one side so as to roll in a particular (curved) direction.
66. **former** refers to his present advice—*before* Reynaldo starts for Paris where he is to try this plan.
67. **me**, *i.e.* my meaning.
68. **God be w'** you has now been corrupted into *good-bye*.
69. **good my lord**. *Cf.* note on i. 2. 50.
70. 'Suspect that he feels the same temptations as you feel yourself.'
72. **ply**, *i.e.* work steadily at. The word might possibly be metaphorical—'let him carry on his own game'.
76. **closet**, *i.e.* private room. (Latin *claudo* 'I shut'.)
77. **doublet all unbraced**, *i.e.* 'double-breasted' coat altogether unfastened'. Such disorder in dress was always supposed to be a symptom of love-sickness.
79. **down-gyved**, *i.e.* (hanging) down like gyves (fetters) to his ankles.
81. **so** is from the same root as *as*.
- purport**, *i.e.* meaning.
87. **goes**. The use of the present tense—usually called the Historic Present—throughout this passage makes the scene more vivid and realistic. *Cf.* i. 2. 210.
89. **perusal**, *i.e.* study.
90. **as**, *i.e.* as if. *Cf.* note on i. 2. 216.
91. **shaking off**. If *shaking* is a verbal noun, it requires a preposition—*e.g.* *with* or *after*—to govern it; if it is a participle agreeing with *he* in line 93, it cannot govern the genitive case. *Cf.* note on i. 3. 119.
94. **as**, *i.e.* that.
100. **go seek**. *Cf.* note on i. 2. 142. But *seek* is here the gerundial infinitive, or infinitive of purpose, and therefore the *to* ought to be used. Contrast 'I *want* (to) buy' with 'I *went* (to) buy'. The omission of the *to* here is probably due to the idiomatic use of the verb *go*. *Cf. go (to) home*, where in Latin also the preposition (*ad*) would be omitted.
101. **ecstasy**, *i.e.* madness—literally 'being beside himself'. (Greek—'standing outside of'.)
102. 'The peculiarity of which is that by its own violence it destroys itself, or the person who feels it.'
- Whose* was once used where we now use *of which*, and *vice versa*.

102. violent property, *i.e.* the property (Latin *proprius* 'peculiarly one's own') of violence.

fordoes, *i.e.* undoes. The prefix *for*, like *per* in Latin, is often intensive. Cf. *perjurate* 'to forswear'.

108. *repel*, *i.e.* send back hastily. (Latin *repello* 'I drive back'.)

111. *quoted*, *i.e.* noticed carefully. (Latin *quotare* 'to divide into chapters'.)

112. *bespew* my jealousy, *i.e.* 'curse my suspicions!'

113. *proper*, *i.e.* as much a distinguishing mark. Cf. note on l. 102 above.

114. 'To overreach ourselves by too much prudence.'

116. *go we*. Cf. note on l. 1. 33.

117. *which* is governed by *to hide* in the next line. (1) 'Hiding this might annoy the King more than telling him that Hamlet is in love with you'; or (2) 'Our hiding this might annoy the King more than our unwillingness to tell bad news would please him.' In (1) either 'to hide' or 'being kept close' is redundant; in (2) 'grief to hide' is in no way a parallel to 'hate to utter'.

Act II.—Scene 2.

2. *moreover* that, *i.e.* over and above the fact that.

6. *sith* = since. *Since* is a contraction of *sithennes*, the genitive of *sith*, nor = neither.

7. *that*. For the omission of the relative cf. ii. 1. 42.

should implies 'we ought to consider it', and refers to past time, though it depends on the present tense *cannot*.

10. *dream of*, *i.e.* imagine. The *of* is really redundant, as often after intransitive verbs in Shakespeare.

11-14. 'That, as you have been brought up with him from such an early date, and afterwards so closely associated with him in his youth, you will condescend to stay some time at least.'

11. *of* = off. Cf. 'of late'.

12. *sith* seems here to have its literal meaning of 'later'.

13. *vouchsafe*, *i.e.* literally 'to guarantee as certain'. *Vouch* is connected with the Latin *vox* 'the voice'.

rest, *i.e.* remaining.

14. *companies*. Cf. note on 'loves' in i. 1. 273.

16. *occasion*, *i.e.* opportunity.

18. 'To remedy which is in our power if it were discovered.'

22. *gentry*, *i.e.* courtesy—'the appropriate conduct of the gentry', on the principle of *noblesse oblige*. Contrast such words as 'villain' or 'heathen'.

23. *expend* is a doublet of *spend*.

Cf. 'estate' and 'state', 'example' and 'sample'.

24. 'To aid and further our hope.'

25. *visitation*, *i.e.* visit.

26. *fits* is singular because *thanks* is treated as singular.

27. *of*, *i.e.* over.

30. *bent*, *i.e.* inclination.

38. *practices*, *i.e.* devices.

41. *are returned*. Shakespeare often uses the auxiliary *be* for *have* with an intransitive verb, especially when it is a verb of motion. Cf. i. 1. 5.

42. *still*, *i.e.* 'always'—its usual meaning in Shakespeare.

47. 'Does not find out the obvious motives of action so surely.'

sure is an adjective used adverbially.

48. *hath used* seems to combine the sense of (1) *used* = 'did once' and (2) *has been used* = 'has been accustomed to'.

49. *very*, *i.e.* true. (Latin *verus*.)

52. *fruit*, *i.e.* the dessert-course.

53. *grace*—a pun.

55. *head and source* is a hendiadys—'the chief source'. *Head* is allied to *chief*.

56. *doubt*, *i.e.* suspect. Cf. ii. 2. 116. the main. Supply *cause*. Cf. *first* below.

59. *Norway*. Cf. note on i. 2. 28. This reference to Norway marks again the need for a strong practical ruler in Denmark.

60. *desires*, *i.e.* good wishes.

61. first. Supply *arrival* or *request*.
 63. the Polack. This use of *the* is called 'genuine'. Cf. note on l. 5.
 64. truly is misplaced; it really qualifies *was*.
 65. whereat *Where* is really a dative case—here governed by *at*.
 66. 67. 'And grieved at *this* fact, that he was so played with and deceived because of his sickness, age, and powerlessness'.
 67. was borne. The singular may be accounted for by the fact that *he* himself rather than his 'sickness, age, and impotence'—is really the subject of the sentence.
 70. vow. For the omission of *a*, cf. note on l. 3. 46.
 71. assay, *i.e.* 'in try force'. *Assay* is a doublet of *essay*.
 77. pass, *i.e.* passage.
 79. 'On such terms as are safe for you and therefore allowed to them.'
 80. likes, *i.e.* 'pleases'.
 81. more consider'd, *i.e.* time for further consideration. Cf. note on ll. 102.
 83. took, *i.e.* undertaken.
 86. expostulate, *i.e.* discuss fully.
 90. wlt here means *wisdom*.
 95. matter, *i.e.* facts.
 98. figure. Supply 'of speech'.
 103. effect defective. The result was a defective mind.
 104. 'It remains for us to find out that, and the question stands in this way.'
 105. perpend, *i.e.* weigh carefully.—N.B. Polonius uses pedantic Latin words!—He is shallow, vulgar, and conceited.
 107. gather and surmise. 'Take these facts and guess the result.'
 115-118. doubt in the first two lines and the last line means 'to be doubtful about', and in the third 'to suspect'.
 121. reckon, *i.e.* to express in numbers—*s.e.* in numbered feet. Cf. "'I am ill at these numbers'".
 122. most best is a double superlative. Cf. note on ll. 2. 11.
 124. machine. 'So long as this body belongs to him, and can be used by him.'

127. more above=moreover. The *ove* in 'above' is the same as in '*over*', both being connected with 'up'.
 128. by, *i.e.* as regards.
 132. might has here its literal sense of *could*. Cf. 'might and main'.
 137. 'If I had acted as though I were simply a piece of furniture, and *consented* at the whole thing—blind, deaf, and dumb.' That is to say, 'if I had not noticed it at all; or, if I had noticed, but pretended that I had not'.
 played the desk, &c., might possibly mean—'if I had simply noted it down and put the note away in my desk'.
 table-book, *i.e.* tablet, note-book.
 140. round—an adjective used adverbially—does not in the least mean 'in a roundabout way', but 'without ceremony'. Cf. 'to rave at roundly'.
 141. bespeak. The addition of the prefix *be-* often makes intransitive verbs transitive. Cf. 'wail' and 'bewail', cf. iv, 5. 37.
 142. out of thy star, *i.e.* either 'out of thy sphere' or 'not intended by destiny for thee'.
 144. resort, in this sense, is really a verb used as a noun.
 146. which done—is a nominative absolute. Cf. note on l. 3. 62.
 took the fruits of, *i.e.* profited by.
 147. repulsed—by her.
 149. watch, *i.e.* wakefulness—loss of sleep.
 150. lightness, *i.e.* light-headedness.
 152. Supply *which*.
 153. like=likely. As the adjectival and adverbial suffix *-ly* is simply a corruption of *like*, the modern form *likely* is anomalous.
 154. fain, *i.e.* gladly.
 155. that, *i.e.* at which.
 159. Supply 'and I *would* find it'.
 160. centre—of the earth.
 may here has its literal sense of 'can'. Cf. l. 132 above.
 162. lobby is connected with *loaf*, and probably meant originally 'a temporary porch made of boughs'.

164. be you and I. Such expressions as this are *wishes* not commands—subjunctives, not imperatives.

an arras, *i.e.* a wall-curtain, or piece of tapestry. See iii. 3. 28.

Arras is a town in the north of France where curtains for covering the rough walls of houses (before paper and paint came into fashion) were first manufactured. Cf. *damask* from *Damascus*, *calico* from *Calicut*, *bayonet* from *Bayonne*.

166. *therson*, *i.e.* because he loves her.

171. board, *i.e.* attack, abost. Cf. to 'board a ship'.

presently, *i.e.* immediately.

173. God - a - mercy, *i.e.* God have mercy - 'Please God'.

175. excellent. Cf. I. 146 above.

fishmonger—fishing for news.

177. *would* is the past tense of *will* (to wish), and is thus used in English as an optative. It has two distinct uses—(1) as here, with a *different* subject, when it retains (some of) the value of an independent verb—'I *would* you were', (2) more often, with the *same* subject, when it is a pure auxiliary, *i.e.* loses all its own meaning in helping another verb to express its meaning.

182. 'If even the sun, who is a god, can only bring evil out of evil, so bad men will continue to be bad.'

186. say, *i.e.* mean.

193. who ought to be *whom*. Cf. note on i. 2. 189.

matter is used by Polonius in the sense of 'subject-matter of the book', but Hamlet intentionally misunderstands.

197. purging, *i.e.* discharging.

198. plentiful lack is an instance of oxymoron, or 'bitter-sweet'. Tennyson has 'And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true'.

201. should is not simply equal to 'would', but has an idea of *necessity* in it.

202. go backward—in years, not literally. (Cf. *go sideways*.)

206. pregnant, *i.e.* full of meaning.

207. happiness, *i.e.* appropriateness—a sense in which it is still used of language.

213. *withal* is simply an emphatic form of *with*.

223. indifferent, *i.e.* average.

225. button—which crowns the very top of it.

229. news is really an adjective, inflected for plural; cf. 'odds'; but it is used as an abstract noun in the singular.

231. doomsday, *i.e.* the Day of Judgment. *Doom* is connected with *deem* and *dempster* (the Manx name for a 'judge').

238. goodly, *i.e.* of goodly proportions—large.

confines, *i.e.* places of confinement.

250. 'What an ambitious man looks upon as a substantial possibility well within his reach is really merely the shadow of a dream.'

254. beggars bodles. Beggars have no ambition, and are therefore substantial people; heroes are ambitious, and are therefore mere shadows.

255. outstretched, *i.e.* far-reaching, ambitious.

256. say, *i.e.* faith.

258-261. 'Nothing of the kind: I will not mix you up with my other servants, for I honestly tell you that they are a worthless set. But do you, as companions on the high road of friendship, honestly tell me what you are doing here.'

264. a halfpenny. Supply *at*.

266. free visitation, *i.e.* spontaneous visit.

269. but is here either (1) a conjunction, or (2) a preposition. (1) 'Say what you like so long as it is to the point.' (2) 'You will say anything except what is true.'

271. modesties. Cf. note on i. 1. 173.

275. consanquancy, refers to their being of the *same* age.

277. a better proposer, *i.e.* a better speaker.

278. even and direct, *i.e.* plain and straightforward.

280. of you, *i.e.* on you.

'After this *'Aside'* Hamlet at once begins to play the madman, as he has found out that the two courtiers are really spies.

283. 'I will anticipate your explanation of the reason of your coming; and so

- there will be no necessity for you to reveal it, and you will not have dropped a single word of what you promised to keep secret.
284. *discovery, i.e. disclosure.*
286. *forgone all custom, i.e. given up all practice.* The *for* is a negative prefix as in *forget, forgive*.
It goes with, *i.e. agrees.*
288. *sterile promontory*—a barren headland thrust out into the ocean of space.
289. *brave, i.e. splendid.*
290. *fretted here* is from O.E. *fret-wan* 'to adorn', not from O.E. *fretan* 'to eat'.
293. *faculty, i.e. powers.*
294. *express, i.e. expressive.*
295. *paragon* is literally 'a model with which comparisons are made'. (Spanish *paragon* 'in comparison with'.)
296. *quintessence.* 'The fifth (Latin *quintus*) was the purest or characteristic essence; according to alchemists—*i.e.* the one which remained after the four 'elements'—earth, air, fire, and water—had been removed from the substance.
297. *no... nor... neither.* For the redundant negative, cf. note on i. 2. 157.
303. *lenten, i.e. as poor as a priest's food on a fast day.*
These players are not merely incidental; they play a very important part—in the plot.
shall, i.e. are bound to.
304. *coted, i.e. overlooked and passed*—a hunting word used only in this one passage. The word comes from the French *cotever* 'to coast along'.
308. *target, i.e. round shield.*
gratias (Latin *gratias* 'for thanks'), *i.e. for nothing (more than 'thanks').*
humorous means 'who displays some particular *humour, i.e. disposition of the mind.*'
310. *tickle o' the ears* means literally 'easily touched on the trigger', *i.e. easily moved to laughter.*
tickle=ticklish.
sere, or sear, is the catch of a gun which keeps the hammer at half or full cock.
311. *halt, i.e. be lame as to the 'feet'.* She may spoil the blank verse as long as she speaks out her mind freely.
314. *the city, i.e. Copenhagen, not Elsinore.* Hamlet's love of the drama is quite in keeping with his intellectual tastes.
315. *they travel* is a noun clause explaining the temporary subject *his residence, i.e. remaining in the city.*
316. *both ways* is redundant.
317. *inhibition, i.e. prohibition to act in the city.* This probably refers to events which had actually been taking place in London, where in 1600 and 1601 performances were 'inhibited' in all the theatres except 'the Globe' and 'the Fortune'. About the same time a company of boys from the Savoy Chapel Royal was licensed to act in Blackfriars, and their popularity still further drew away support from the grown-up actors.
324. *aery* is from a Latin word *area* 'the nest of a bird of prey'. It came to be mis-spelt *eyry* by being wrongly connected with the Teutonic *ey* 'an egg'.
eyases, i.e. nestlings.
- 324-328. 'The grown-up actors win less support because there is a troop of boy-actors—a regular nest of young hawks—who scream out their parts at the top of their voices, and are violently applauded for doing so. Indeed, they are so much the rage, in spite of their noise, that many good and experienced actors dare not enter the lists against their shrill voices.'
330. *escoted, i.e. paid.* Cf. '*scot-free*' = 'without payment'.
- 330-335. 'Will they give up their profession when their voices break? Will they not say later on, if—as is most likely, unless they have other resources to fall back on—they become public players, that those who write dramas for them, are wronging them by making them *exclaim against* what they are themselves going to be?'
336. *quality, i.e. profession.* Cf. i. 409 below.
338. *exclaim against, i.e. either (1) find fault with, or (2) use their shrill treble voices to the prejudice of actors.*

335. to do=*'ado'*, which is simply a contraction of the Scandinavian form of the infinitive—*at do*.

336. tarre, *i.e.* to urge.

337. argument, *i.e.* a plot.

338. cuffs, *i.e.* fisticuffs—blows.

341. it, *i.e.* the prize. The boys carry *everything* before them, even the very theatre itself, which, if Shakespeare's own Globe Theatre, had for a sign 'Hercules carrying the earth on his shoulders'.

344. mine uncle is king accounts, in Hamlet's mind, for everything that is amiss. He generalizes hastily—from his own unhappy experience.

345. mows, *i.e.* grimaces.

347. portraiture in little, *i.e.* a miniature of him.

'a blood' stands for '*Christ's* blood' as '*death* and *wounds* stand for '*Christ's* death' and '*Christ's* wounds'. This superstitious avoidance of a particular name was essentially Greek. Cf. i. 1. 16.

350. the appurtenance of. That which appertains to welcome should always be made in customary fashion with due formality; allow me to treat you in this way, otherwise my condescension to the players, which *must* be ceremonious, will seem to be more friendly than to you.

351. fashion and ceremony is another instance of *heidiadya*.

352. comply, *i.e.* 'compliment'—'*show complete civility to*'.

garb, *i.e.* way (of dress).

353. extent, *i.e.* show of courtesy.

show, &c.; *i.e.* must have all necessary external formality.

358. but mad north-north-west, *i.e.* only in one particular direction.

359. handsaw. Hamlet is satirically punning on the word *heronsaw*=*heron*. At all other times he can distinguish between innocence and rapacity.

The allusion to hawking has been explained as follows:—If a heron were started, he would probably fly with the wind; if the wind were N.N.W., he would fly to the south; and the rays of the sun would make it difficult to distinguish the hawk from the heron. If the wind were south, the heron would fly north; and, as the sun would then be at the

back of the sportsman, it would be easy to distinguish both birds."

360. well is an adjective used as a noun. Cf. *good*; or it may be understood after *be*.

363. swaddling clouts, *i.e.* baby's clothes.

364. happily, *i.e.* haply—perhaps. Cf. i. 1. 134, where it *may* mean the same.

370. Roscius was a great actor at Rome in the year B.C. 90, who taught Cicero to speak.

373. Buz, buz!—'*stale news*'.

375. on his ass is Hamlet's satirical interpretation of '*on my honour*'.

378. scene-indivisible, *i.e.* a play in which the *Unity of Place* was strictly adhered to.

379. poem unlimited, *i.e.* a play in which neither the *Unity of Time* nor the *Unity of Place* was adhered to.

Seneca was a tragedian and Plautus a comedian.

380. law of writ, *i.e.* a drama completely worked out on the regular lines.

the liberty, *i.e.* an improvised sketch.

382. Jephthah. See *Judges* xi. and xii.

392. follows. Hamlet is again punning on the double sense of *follows*—(1) coming after and (2) resulting from.

398. row, chanson, *i.e.* line of the song—the '*affected*' words are used in satirical imitation of Polonius.

399. abridgement probably means—that which cuts me short', but in Shakespeare's time the word also meant '*a short play*', and Hamlet may be punning on the two meanings.

402. valanced, *i.e.* fringed with a beard.

405. altitude of a chopine, *i.e.* by the height of a cork heel—which was sometimes as much as 18 inches high.

406. cracked—because female parts were played by boys.

ring. Another pun. There was a ring stamped on the coin round the head of the sovereign; and if the crack extended inside the ring,

- the coin would not 'ring' sound, and was made unfit for currency.
408. straight is an adjective used adverbially, 'at once'.
412. *roe* is another instance of the so-called *ethic dative*. Cf. note on ii. 1. 7.
414. *caviare* to the general, *i.e.* delicacy unappreciated by the mass. *Caviare* is a highly seasoned preparation of sturgeon's roe, which requires a cultivated taste. *General* is an adjective used as a noun. Cf. l. 360 above.
416. cried in the top, *i.e.* were superior to.
417. digested, *i.e.* arranged. *modesty* (Latin *modestia*) has its old sense of 'correctness'.
418. *sallets*, *i.e.* something to give a relish.
419. nor no. Cf. note on i. 2. 157. phrase, *i.e.* style.
422. more handsome than fine, *i.e.* with more natural charm than finished art; or, owing more to its proportion than to its ornamentation.
423. thereabout, *i.e.* at that part, cf. whereabouts.
- Aeneas*, the reputed founder of the Roman nation, wandering through the Mediterranean, landed at Carthage, and was entertained by Queen *Dido*, to whom he related the story of the fall of Troy (*Ilium*);—how the Greeks, failing to take the city by assault, craftily filled a wooden horse with armed men; this was dragged within the walls by the Trojans as a trophy, whereupon the Greeks, coming forth at night, devastated the city with fire and sword; King *Priam* was killed by *Pyrhus*; *Hecuba*, the queen, was made a slave; and *Aeneas* escaped, bearing his father, *Anchises*, on his shoulders through the flames.
426. Hyrcanian beast, *i.e.* the tiger. Hyrcania was the name of Central Persia.
430. ominous, *i.e.* fatal.
432. heraldry is the art of designing, representing, and interpreting the coats of arms which are the badges of noble families. Frequent terms of heraldry are:—*sable*, black; *gules*, red; *couchant*, an attitude of repose; *tricked*, drawn or sketched.
435. impasted, *i.e.* pasted over with the dust of the streets.
437. lord's is subjective in form, but objective in sense.
438. *size* is a kind of weak glue. *coagulate* is a past participle, not an ordinary adjective, the *-ed* having been dropped for euphony—after the *-te*.
439. carbuncles (Latin *carbunculus* 'a little coal') are blood-red in colour.
444. anon=in one (moment).
445. short is another adjective used adverbially.
447. repugnant to, *i.e.* disobeying. unequal, cf. *short* above.
449. wiff=whiff. fell, *i.e.* cruel.
452. his=its, cf. note on i. 2. 215.
454. milky, *i.e.* milk-white.
456. painted, *i.e.* in a picture.
457. Ignoring both his own wishes and the deed in hand.
459. against, *i.e.* before, cf. i. 2. 158.
460. rack, *i.e.* thin drifting clouds (in the upper air).
462. hush, *i.e.* silent. This use of a noun for an adjective is very rare unless it goes immediately with its noun, as in "any moment leisure" (i. 3. 133), "the region kites" (ii. 2. 552), or "his music vows" (iii. 1. 153).
463. the region, *i.e.* that part of the sky.
464. a-work, *i.e.* at work, cf. *asleep*.
465. the Cyclops were fabled giants who were said to assist Vulcan at his smithy beneath Mount Etna in making weapon-proof armour for the gods.
466. Mars was the god of war. proof eternal, *i.e.* resisting all blows.
467. remorse, *i.e.* simply 'pity', not 'regret'.
- bleeding, *i.e.* dripping with blood.
472. fellows, *i.e.* fellows—the curved pieces of wood that form the rim of a wheel.
472. nave=navel—the hub.
474. shall. For the omission of the verb of motion, cf. note on l. 361 below.
475. who, *i.e.* whoever.
477. mobled, *i.e.* muffled.
482. blisson rheum, *i.e.* blinding tears.
482. late=lately.

483. o'er-teemed, *i.e.* that had borne too many children — for her own happiness. The participle is *passive*, cf. note on iii. 2. 23.
486. 'Would have proposed the de-thronement of Fortune.'
490. instant, cf. i. 5. 55.
492. *milk*, *i.e.* tearful — from *pity*, literally 'milk-yielding'.
493. *passion*, *i.e.* compassion.
497. good my lord, cf. note on i. 2. 50. bestowed, *i.e.* lodged.
498. abstract, *i.e.* epitomes.
499. 'It would be better for you 'to' have a bad epitaph after your death.' You is the dative, as in 'if you please'; but this fact was forgotten, and we have in Shakespeare 'I were better', as in modern English 'if I please'.
503. *bodykins*, *i.e.* body — 'the bread in the sacrament'.
504. after, *i.e.* according to. Cf. the Latin *secundum* 'according to', from *sequor* 'I follow'.
505. the less. *Thē* is the ablative of *that*.
510. you, *i.e.* the whole company, opposed to *thou*, the First Player.
524. conceit, *i.e.* conception (of the part).
527. whole function. 'All his actions being appropriate to his conception of the part.'
532. cue, *i.e.* that which prompts — literally 'the last words of the previous speaker' (Latin *cauda* 'a tail').
534. the general ear, *i.e.* the ear of the public. Cf. 414 above.
535. free, *i.e.* free — from *guilt*.
536. *amaze* is simply the Teutonic synonym for the Roman *confundere* — 'confuse'.
539. muddy-mettled, *i.e.* irresolute — not 'clear-minded'. He is evidently conscience-stricken at the thought of his own weakness.
- peak, *i.e.* pine.
540. John-a-dreams is a general name for any dreamer. cf. *Jack-a-lantern*, *Jackanapes* (Jack o' apes). Jacques is the most common name in France, as John is in England (cf. *John Bull*); so *Jack* came to be used as a substitute for *John*, though it is really the short form of *Jaco-*

bis, the Latin for *James*. The word is also used, with a similar 'general' meaning, in 'boot-Jack', 'roasting-Jack', 'Union Jack'.

540. unpregnant of, *i.e.* not inspired by.

542. property, *i.e.* all that was his own (Latin *proprium*).

543. defeat, *i.e.* undoing — destruction (Fr. *défaire*).

547. me. Cf. l. 412 above.

549. 's wounds. Cf. note on l. 347 above.

550. but — (by-out) — may (1) either have its root-meaning of *except* — *without* (by-out), or (2) be simply adversative. If (1), cf. "it never rains *but* it pours", if (2), the sentence really is compressed from "It cannot be (that I am courageous), *but* I am a coward".

'I have no more liver than a pigeon, and do not feel resentment against oppression; otherwise I should have fattened all the kites in this part of the sky with the carcass of this slave.'

The liver was in ancient times considered to be the seat of the passions as the heart is nominally now; and the liver has a great effect on many 'passions', but not on 'the passions', *i.e.* hate and love. Gall is the bitter fluid 'secreted' by the liver.

552. the region kites. Cf. note on l. 462 above.

554. remorseless. The *re* has no force, cf. note on l. 467 above.

Kindless is the opposite of *kindly*, and has its root meaning of 'unnatural' — 'with no proper feeling for his kin'.

559. a-cursing. Cf. note on l. 3. 119. slut is the feminine of *sloven*.

560. scullion, *i.e.* a kitchen drudge.

561. about, *i.e.* (set) about (your work).

564. presently, *i.e.* 'on the spot', as it is still used in Scotland.

570. tent, *i.e.* probe (Latin *tentare*).

- blench, *i.e.* wince — connected with *blink*.

576. abuses, *i.e.* deceives.

577. relative, *i.e.* closely connected with the matter — conclusive.

578. A riming couplet was often introduced as a cue, to mark the end of a speech or scene.

Act III.—Scene I.

1. *circumstance*, *i.e.* round-aboutness (Latin *circum stare*, 'to stand round').
3. *grating*, *i.e.* wearing out.
4. Hamlet's delay has given time for the king's suspicions to be aroused.
7. *sounded* (Lat. *sub-undare* 'to plumb water') must be distinguished from the noun *sound* (Latin *sonus* 'a noise') and from the adjective *sound* (Latin *sanus* 'healthy').
8. Supply *he* from *him* in l. 7.
12. 'In a restrained manner—with forced politeness.'
13. *of*, in each instance, makes a genitive of respect—'in the matter of'.
14. *assay*, *i.e.* (1) invite to, or (2) test by. *Assay* and *essay* are doublets, cf. *kirk* and *church*, *skirt* and *shirt*, *egg* and *edge* in l. 26 below.
17. *o'er-raught*=over-reached, *i.e.* overtook.
28. *shall*, *i.e.* feel bound to.
29. *closely* has its literal sense of 'secretly' (Latin *clausus* 'shut up').
31. *affront*, *i.e.* come face to face with.
32. *lawful espials*, *i.e.* spies with right to spy.
33. *bestow*, *i.e.* hide.
35. *by him*, *i.e.* from him.
is behaved, *i.e.* is when we have noticed his behaviour. *Behaved* is a past participle, but not passive.
42. *honours*. Cf. note on l. 1. 173.
43. *so please you*, *i.e.* (if it may) so please you. Cf. note on ii. 2. 499.
44. *on*. We should now say 'off'.
45. *show*. The article is omitted, because in Shakespeare's time *a* and *the* meant too definitely *one* and *that*.
colour, *i.e.* give some colour to.
49. This is the first hint of any stings of conscience in the king's heart.
52. *to*, *i.e.* compared to.
the thing that helps it, *i.e.* the paint which helps it to appear beautiful.
53. *paint*, *i.e.* disguised.
56. *to be*, *i.e.* is it to be suicide. The idea of suicide has occurred to him before (i. 2. 132), but that way out of the difficulty is too easy—for a philosopher.
59. N.B. The metaphor is mixed.
65. *rub*. The metaphor is from the game of bowls—a *rub* being anything that turns a bowl out of its course.
66. *what... come* is the nominative to *must* in l. 68—'the question what'.
67. *mortal coil*, *i.e.* 'the burden, turmoil, of mortality'.
- 68, 69. 'Must cause us to pause; in that lies the consideration that makes a long life a calamity.'
70. *time*, *i.e.* the world.
73. *office*, *i.e.* 'office-bearers', so *patient merit* below means 'a man of patience and merit'.
76. *bare*—(1) mere, or (2) unsheathed. *fardels*, *i.e.* burdens.
77. *grunt* is a strong cognate of *groan*.
78. *but that*, *i.e.* except for the fact that. Cf. note on ii. 2. 550.
79. *bourn*, *i.e.* boundary.
83. *conscience* = consideration, deliberation, 'thought' in l. 85.
84. 'And thus the healthy colour natural to Resolution is so destroyed by over-anxiety as to turn to pallor.'
86. *pitch*, *i.e.* importance.
87. 'By too much attention to this have their currents turned aside.'
88. *the name*, *i.e.* *even* the name.
89. *orisons*—*i.e.* prayers—is a doublet of *oration*, as *benison* is of *benediction*. Cf. note on l. 14 above.
His mother's sin has made him lose faith in womanhood, and now he sees that Ophelia is acting as a decoy. He had known before that she was weak; he now finds that she is also false.
how does... this many a day. The *past* continuousness of the action is neglected, while its *present* existence is emphasized.
91. *many* is to be explained here as an adverb qualifying *a*—'many-times one'.
93. *remembrances*, *i.e.* souvenirs.
of yours. This form of construction can only be used when it is implied that there are others of the same kind. So we can say—'a play of Shakespeare's (plays)', but not—'a father of John's (fathers)'.
94. *re-deliver*. The *re* has its root

- meaning of 'back—where they are due'.
99. **their perfume lost**—'if the words have lost their sweetness'.
101. **wax, i.e. grow.** The root idea of 'increase' (Latin *augere*) is so far forgotten that Shakespeare even has the phrase 'wax lean'.
102. **honest here means to be true (to him) and virtuous.** He probably hears a rustle behind the arras, and probably suspects a spy.
107. 'You should jealously guard your virtue from the attacks which your beauty might bring upon it.'
113. **His=it.**
sometime, i.e. at some former time—once.
117. **relish of it, i.e. smack of it—we shall still smack of our old (worthless) stock in despite of a loaven of virtue.**
121. **Indifferent = indifferently, i.e. 'moderately'.**
122. **me.** The personal pronouns did not originally need to be compounded with *self* to have a reflexive sense. The *self* only made the pronoun more emphatic—'I *myself* have said it'.
124. **at my beck, i.e. at my command.**
128. **ways.** Cf. note on i. 3. 135.
thy . . . your. *Thou* in Shakespeare is used in much the same way as the modern German *Du* is used,—to express (1) affection towards friends; (2) anger or contempt towards foes; (3) the kindly superiority of a master over a servant.
130. Hamlet obviously sees that this is a lie.
138. **monsters**—'something to be pointed at' (Latin *monstrare*, 'to point out').
143. 'You misname men out of sheer wantonness, and excuse yourselves on the score of ignorance.'
nickname is a noun used as a verb, cf. note on i. 1. 98. A *nickname* ought really to be *an* *the* (extra-)name; cf. a *nick* (an *in-*gore), a *new* (an *out* or *off*). This transference of the *n* from the article to the substantive is called Prothesis; the contrary process—e.g. *an apron*—(a *n*apron, or *n*apkin)—is called Aphæresis.
150. 'The courtier's discerning eye, the brave soldier's sword, the scholar's eloquence.' This use of the article is called *generic*.
151. 'The hope and flower of the nation at its best.'
152. **mould, i.e. model.**
154. **defect.** Cf. note on i. 2. 20.
155. **music vows.** Cf. note on ii. 2. 462.
158. **blown, i.e. fully blown.**
159. **blasted with ecstasy, i.e. ruined by madness.** *Ecstasy* is literally a 'standing out of (one's mind)'.
me is the dative. Cf. note on ii. 2. 499.
162. **nor . . . not.** For the double negative, cf. note i. 2. 157.
164. **on brood, i.e. brooding.**
165. **disclose** is the technical word for a young bird chipping its way out of the egg.
166. **for to prevent.** The infinitive is simply an abstract noun, and, in Old English it was inflected for case, like any other noun. The dative was governed, as usual, by *to* or *for*, and was used only to express purpose. This meaning was, however, gradually weakened, until the dative infinitive with *to* was confused with the nominative or objective infinitive without *to*; then *for*, the other sign of the dative, was added—again to express purpose, e.g. 'what went ye out *for to* see?' Cf. note on ii. 1. 100.
168. **shall.** For the omission of *so*, cf. note on ii. 2. 474.
169. **demand, i.e. demanding.**
171. **shall expel.** The 'shall' implies 'will expel as they ought to'.
172. **something** is used adverbially=somewhat.
173. **brains** is practically singular—'mind'.
174. **from fashion of himself, i.e. off his usual behaviour.**
175. **shall, i.e. is bound to.**
182. **round,** cf. note on ii. 2. 140.
184. **find him, i.e. find him (his secret) out.**

Act III.—Scene 2.

3. **your** is not meant to refer to the company present, cf. iv. 3. 21.

I had as lief. *I had* is subjunctive—'I would have the town-crier speaking my lines as gladly as I would have you'.

Lief is of course an adverb here, modifying *had*, but it is used by Shakespeare as an adjective—'dear', and it is always adjectival in form.

4. **nor**. **not**. Cf. note on i. 2. 157.

7. **temperance**, i.e. a moderation—self-control.

8. **robustious periwig-pated**, i.e. an energetic actor, wearing a wig. The French *peruque* became *periwig*, and this was shortened into *wig*, cf. 'bus' from 'omnibus'. In Shakespeare's time wigs were worn only by actors, but before the end of the 17th century they had come into general use.

10. **groundlings**, i.e. the hearers who stood on the floor or pit while the gentry sat in the gallery. The word is a double diminutive, and thus has a 'contemptuous' sense, cf. *worldling* and *lord-ling*. In *punster* and *gamester* a similar idea is conveyed by the feminine suffix.

capable of, i.e. understand—have capacity for.

11. **Inexplicable**, i.e. unintelligible.

12. **Termagant** was the name given, in the old mystery-plays, to a fiendish deity of the Saracens.

out-Herods. Herod, in the same way, was the 'violent character' in the mystery-plays.

15. **not**. **neither**. Cf. note on i. 2. 157.

18. **modesty**, i.e. the moderation.

from, i.e. contrary to.

19. **whose**. *Who* was formerly used for *which* and *vice versa*—even of inanimate objects.

22. **his form and pressure**, i.e. impression of *his* character. For *his* and *its*, cf. note on i. 2. 115.

23. **come tardy off**, i.e. inefficiently represented. *Come* is really past participle *passive*, though *to come* is an intransitive verb; but *off* gives it a sort of 'deponent' force. Cf. 'been behaved', and 'o'er-teemed' (ii. 2. 483).

23. **make** is subjunctive, and implies 'doubt'.

24. **censure** (Latin *censeo* 'I think') means simply 'opinion', not 'adverse opinion'.

the which. The use of *the* in this manner emphasizes the antecedent—the judicious.

25. **allowance**, i.e. estimation.

26. **there be**. *Be* is always more commonly used by Shakespeare with the plural than with the singular; it is almost *=are*, but suggests also the 'class' of players taken collectively.

32. **Indifferently**, i.e. moderately well.

36. **themselves**, i.e. of themselves—when the joke is not in the play.

40. **you**. Cf. note on iii. 1. 122.

42. **and**, i.e. yes, and.

presently, i.e. at once.

49. 'I have met with in my *intercourse* among men.'

51. **may** has its root sense of 'can'.

54. **candied**, i.e. flattering.

55. 'Let the flatterer bend his knee significantly where his fawning is certain to be rewarded.'

N.B. The nominative to *crook* is really *tongue*.

57. **her choice**. The soul, like Psyche, was regarded as feminine.

58. **of men**, i.e. about men. Cf. I. 68 below.

63. **blood and judgement**, i.e. animal and intellectual nature—passion and reason.

64. **pipe**. Hamlet uses the same metaphor in line 330 below.

68. 'But I have said *rather* too much about this.'

72. **afloat**, i.e. started—literally 'on foot', cf. 'abroad', 'afoot', &c.

73. **comment**, i.e. strained attention.

74. **occulted**, i.e. hidden. The word is a past participle formed from the adjective *occultus*, which is itself a past participle (Latin *occultus* 'hidden').

75. **unkennel itself**, i.e. simply 'reveal'.

In one speech, probably *=at* one speech, i.e. Hamlet's addition.

78. **stithy** is an instance of the part

- being put for the whole—the *anvil* being put for the whole *smithy*, cf. 'twenty-thousand *foot* and two thousand *horse*', 'so many *sail*', 'so many *hands*' (in a factory).
78. *needful note*, i.e. all possible attention. Another reading is *heedful*.
81. 'In deciding how he looked.' Cf. note on l. 24 above.
82. 'I will 'go bail' that not the slightest manifestation of guilt shall escape detection.'
pay the theft, i.e. pay for what is *thieved*.
84. *idle*, i.e. trifling—light-headed.
86. *fares*, i.e. 'is', but Hamlet intentionally takes the word in the sense of 'eats'.
87. *excellent*=excellently.
of, i.e. 'on' or 'off', cf. iii. i. 44, but the word may go closely with *fare* (=eat; understood—'partake of').
the *chameleon* is a lizard of varying colour, which was supposed to live on air.
88. *promise-crammed*, i.e. crammed with *nothing real*.
89. *have*, i.e. grasp (mentally)—understand.
91. *now*, i.e. since I have given them to you.
95. the *Capitol* was at once a temple to Jupiter and the dominating fortress of Rome.
N.B. *Cæsar* was not killed in the *Capitol*, but in Pompey's Theatre.
98. *be*. Cf. note on l. 26 above.
99. *stay*, i.e. wait.
106. *your only jig-maker*, i.e. your *unique* causer of merriment; cf. iv. 3. 23.
108. *within's*=within this.
111. *sables*, i.e. the most magnificent and expensive mourning.
113. *by'r lady*=by our lady—i.e. the Virgin Mary.
114. 'Or else he will sink into *oblivion*.'
115. the *hobby horse*—a pantomime 'horse', made of two men—was an important feature in the morris dances of May-Day, which the Puritans of Shakespeare's time were trying to abolish.
- Stage directions*. hautboy, i.e. oboe, a wind instrument.
lays him. Cf. note on i. 1. 5.
118. *niching mallecho*, i.e. sneaking mischief. *Misching* is the common word in Gloucestershire for 'playing truant'. *Mallecho* is the Spanish for 'an evil action'.
119. 'I suppose this *durab* show illustrates the plot of the play.'
120. *by this*, i.e. from this.
the players—though the *King* can.
125. *posy*, i.e. love motto.
128. *cart* is a diminutive of *car*, and is probably a double of *chariot*.
129. *Tellus*. Sometimes when the nominative singular of a word containing more than one syllable ends in an *-s* (written or only sounded), we drop the genitive inflection for euphony, e.g. 'For conscience' sake'; and this is always done in the case of a genitive plural the nominative plural of which ends in *-s*.
orbod, i.e. round.
130. *sheen* is the noun of *shine*.
133. *commutual* is a strong form of *mutual*.
136. *woe* is *me*. Cf. note on ii. 2. 499.
137. *cheer*, i.e. cheerfulness.
138. *distrust*, i.e. am anxious.
139. 'My anxiety must in no way discomfort you.'
140. *holds quantity*, i.e. are proportionate.
Holds is probably the old northern plural, which did end in *-s* (*-es*), as the old midland plural ended in *-n* (*-en*); and both these forms survived down to Shakespeare's time. But *quantity* might be the subject of the sentence, or 'fear and love' might be used as a compound idea. Cf. iii. 3. 14.
141. 'Neither exists at all, or both exist to excess', or 'they either contain nothing real or they contain intense reality'.
147. 'My active powers cease to perform their functions.'
leave= 'leave off'. Cf. iii. 4. 34 and 56.
153. *but*, i.e. except those.
154. *wormword*—for the King.
155. *instances*, i.e. inducements.
156. *respects*, i.e. considerations.
161. 'We keep our purpose only as long as we remember it.'

162. validity, *i.e.* permanent strength.
164. fall unshaken, *i.e.* falls without shaking. The number of *fall* is probably due to the collective word *fruit*; of course, *purpose* is the real subject.
165. most necessary, *i.e.* quite unavoidable.
168. the passion ending is a nominative absolute.
- 169, 170. 'The resolutions made under the stress of grief or joy, by their very existence, take off the edge from the grief or the joy.'
173. nor...not. Cf. note on i. 2. 157.
174. loves, *i.e.* mutual love.
176. or else. One of the two words is redundant, unless *else* means 'on the contrary'.
177. great man down is another nominative absolute.
180. who not needs, *i.e.* he who does not need.
181. who in want, *i.e.* he who being in want.
182. seasons, *i.e.* ripens him into.
183. begun=began. Past indicative forms in *u* are very common in Shakespeare, *e.g.* sung, drunk, spring.
185. still, *i.e.* 'always'—as usual in Shakespeare.
188. die, *i.e.* 'let die', or 'will die'.
189. day and night are probably the subjects to *lock*, day referring to the sport and night to the repose.
191. desperation, *i.e.* despair.
192. 'May the utmost limit of my joy be, as it were, an imprisoned hermit's fare.'
- anchor=anchorage.
193. 'May every impediment that makes pale the face of joy, blank is the hard doublet of *Manch*, of *brig*, and *bridge*, *kirk* and *church*, *skirt* and *skirt*.'
195. hence, *i.e.* hereafter.
199. vainish adverb—'gladly'.
202. methinks. The verb 'to think' had originally two forms, one active—'to consider', and the other neuter—'to seem'; and the latter survives in *me thinks*, *i.e.* '(to) me (it) seems'.
205. It has been supposed that the king and the queen had not noticed the dumb show which had given the general drift of the plot.
210. tropically, *i.e.* in a trope, or figurative fashion—for it is 'to catch the conscience of the king'.
211. image, *i.e.* representation.
214. we. Cf. note on i. 4. 54.
215. 'It is only a horse whose shoulders are already sore that shrinks from a touch.' It is only a wounded conscience that smart.
217. chorus. In classical plays the chorus supplies information and connects the different parts of the argument. Shakespeare's *Henry V.* is written with a chorus.
219. 'I could explain the difference between your actions and your pretended love for me if I only saw who was pulling the strings.'
222. leave. Cf. i. 147 above.
225. 'No one watching but opportunity, who is in league with the murderer.'
227. Hecate, or Diana, or Luna, according as she was thought of as queen of *Hades*, *Earth*, and *Heaven*.
- ban, *i.e.* curse.
228. 'Thy marvellous nature, with its essential power of destruction, instantly seizes even a perfectly healthy body.'
232. Italian literature exercised great influence on Shakespeare and his contemporaries.
240. go weep. Cf. note on iii. 1. 166.
- 244-47. 'If the rest of my fortunes turned traitors to me, would not this successful performance—with the necessary outfit of feathers and embroidered shoes—get me a place in my theatrical company.'
244. feathers were much worn on the stage in Shakespeare's time.
246. Provincial, *i.e.* from *Provence*. the (first) 'province' of the Roman Republic.
247. razed, *i.e.* embroidered.
- cry, *i.e.* 'company'—generally used in this sense, only, of dogs.
248. Actors in Shakespeare's time were not paid salaries, but shared any profits.
249. I. Supply *know* from the next line.
250. Damon is an allusion to the old classical story of the two friends *Damon* and *Pythias*.

253. **pajock**—*i.e.* peacock—is inserted by Hamlet instead of the riming *ass*.

256. **pound**. Some names, originally neuter, had no inflection for plural, cf. *deer, sheep, year*. **Pound**, like many names of measures, had originally an indefinite meaning—'a weight' (Latin *pondus*). Cf. *foot, furlong* (furlow-long), *acre* (Latin *ager, a field*).

260. **recorders**, *i.e.* flageolets.

262. **perdy** is a corruption of '*par Dieu*'.

268. **marvellous distempered**, *i.e.* 'marvellously out of temper', but Hamlet intentionally misunderstands the word.

270. **choler**, *i.e.* anger.

271. **should** means 'would and ought to'.

more **richer** is a double comparative, cf. *near-er=nigh-er-er*. Cf. I. 176 above and iii. 3. 19.

272. **to put him to his purgation**, *i.e.* 'to take his cure in hand'.

274. **frame**, *i.e.* definite form.

275. **from my affair**, *i.e.* 'at a tangent from the business I have to bring before you'.

281. **wholesome**, *i.e.* sensible.

282. **pardon**, *i.e.* leave to go. Cf. i. 2. 56.

291. **admiration**, *i.e.* 'surprise'—its literal sense.

297. **shall**, *i.e.* 'are bound to'—(just as much as if) she were, &c.

300. 'By these *hands*'.

301. **your cause of**, *i.e.* the cause of *your*, cf. "*his* means of death" (iv. 3. 190). When two nouns are connected by *of*, they may be so strictly regarded as one word that an adject-

tive may be placed before the whole compound word instead of before the second part of it.

307. 'While the grass grows, the steed starves.'

308. **something**=somewhat—an accusative of respect—cf. i. 2. 41.

309. 'To speak privately with you—why do you *try to take advantage* (go round so as to get to windward) of me.'

311. **toll**, net—from Latin *tela* 'a web'; the word has nothing to do with *toil*, 'labour', from the Teutonic *to till*.

312. 'If my duty to the Queen makes me seem too bold to you, it is also my love for you that makes me speak out so frankly.'

321. **govern these ventages**, *i.e.* manage these stops. A *ventage* is a wind-hole (Latin *ventus* 'wind').

334. **fret** is used punningly—(1) to vex and (2) to guide the fingers (by means of frets, or small lengths of wire).

338. **would speak**, *i.e.* wished to speak—literally 'wished' (when she gave me her order).

presently, *i.e.* at once.

339. **In shape**. For the omission of *the*, cf. note on i. 3. 67.

342. **methinks**, cf. note on I. 203 above.

347. **top of my bent**, *i.e.* to the highest pitch. The metaphor is probably from archery.

356. **Nero** was a Roman emperor who murdered his mother.

358. Cf. iii. 4. 93.

360. 'However much she may be *blamed* by my words, I will never confirm them by my deeds.'

Act III.—Scene 3.

2. **range**, *i.e.* have free play, you, for yourselves. Cf. note on i. 1. 5.

4. **shall along**. For the omission of the verb of motion, cf. note on ii. 2. 474.

5. 'The conditions of my power *cannot* bear the imminent risks that I run hour after hour from his mad practices.'

5. *May* has its literal sense of '*can*', cf. '*might and main*'.

8. For the omission of *a*, cf. note on i. 3. 46.

11. 'Each individual is bound to defend himself by all conceivable means from injury.'

13. **noyance**=annoyance.

14. **depends and rests**, cf. note on iii. 2. 140. This irregularity occurs

- most frequently when the subject comes, as here, *after* the verb.
15. *cease*=decease. Either the *cease* or the *dies* is redundant, owing to the abstract being used for the concrete.
16. *gulf*, *i.e.* the whirlpool — which *engulfs*.
17. *massy*=massive.
19. *whose*, for *of which*, cf. note on i. 3. 15.
- lesser* is a double comparative, cf. iii. 2. 271.
20. *mortised*, *i.e.* closely fixed. A *mortise* is a hole cut in one piece of timber to receive the *tenon*, or projection, of another.
- which*, *i.e.* 'as to which' — an accusative of respect.
25. *fear*, *i.e.* cause of fear.
26. *us*. Cf. i. 2 above.
28. *arras*. Cf. note ii. 2. 164.
29. *process*, *i.e.* the proceedings.
- tax*.. *home*, *i.e.* reprove.. deeply.
31. *more audience* is another instance of the abstract for the concrete, cf. i. 15 above.
33. *of vantage*, *i.e.* from (off) a post of vantage.
36. *smells* is intransitive.
37. *primal eldest*, *i.e.* the oldest and the one which headed the list of curses—Cain's sin.
43. *stand in pause*, *i.e.* 'hesitate'—governing the noun clause in the objective.
- first* is redundant before *begin*.
47. 'Except to stand face to face with sin—and forgive it.'
49. *forestalled*, *i.e.* saved *before*—so that here again there is redundancy.
52. Claudius regrets, but does not repent of, his crime. His confession serves only to remove the last vestige of doubt from Hamlet's mind, and the latter's delay in carrying out his vengeance is simply weak. The reasons given below (in i. 85, 86) for not acting *now* are merely excuses.
53. *am possess'd of*. Cf. note on i. 1. 89.
54. *effects*, *i.e.* goods.
55. *ambition*, *i.e.* 'the object of ambition', as *offence* in the next line is—'the objects gained by the offence'.
58. *offence's gilded hand*, *i.e.* simply 'a rich offender'.
59. *the wicked prize*, *i.e.* the gains wickedly got.
62. *his*=*its*.
- compelled*, supply *are*. Cf. i. 2. 90.
64. *rests*, *i.e.* remains (Latin *restare*, 'to remain'). It has no connection with the English word *rest*=*'repose'*.
65. *can*, supply *do*.
68. *lmed*, *i.e.* snared—as a bird.
69. *engaged*, *i.e.* entangled.
- assay*, *i.e.* an effort.
71. *the* is 'generic'.
73. *pat*, *i.e.* 'easily and fitly'—literally 'with a pat'.
75. *would be scann'd*, *i.e.* needs to be closely looked into.
80. *grossly* refers to *father* ('unshrived'), not to *took*.
81. *broad blown*, cf. i. 5. 60.
- flush as May*, *i.e.* 'in the full spring of life'.
82. *audit*, *i.e.* examination of his 'accounts', cf. i. 5. 62.
83. 'As far as the details go which *we* can run over from our own knowledge.'
85. *to take*, *i.e.* by taking.
- purging*, *i.e.* cleansing—by confession of sin.
86. *passage*—to the other world.
88. *hent*, *i.e.* purpose.
94. *stays*, *i.e.* is waiting.
95. 'This remedy of prayer will not cure your soul, nor save your body—permanently.'

Act III.—Scene 4.

1. *straight*=straightway.
- lay home*, cf. iii. 3. 29.
2. *broad*, *i.e.* openly unrestrained.
4. *heat*, *i.e.* anger from the king
- sconce*=*enconce*.
5. *round*, cf. ii. 2. 140.

14. forgot=forgotten.

rood, *i.e.* the holy rood. The cross.

20. Inmost is a double superlative. There was an old superlative ending *-ma*, which is also found in Latin, *e.g.* *extremus*; and *-est* (*-ost*), the regular superlative inflection for a short word, was added after it had been forgotten that the form in *m* was already a superlative. *Out-er-m-ost* combines with the double superlative the comparative inflection.

24. Hamlet makes a pass or thrust with his sword, and declares he will wager a ducat (about 4 shillings) that the man he struck is dead.

This is the first tragic result of Hamlet's delay to kill Claudius.

25. O me. *me* may be described either as an 'exclamatory' accusative, or as a dative, cf. 'woe is *me*'.

29. marry is intransitive—'enter into marriage *with*'.

Hamlet assumes—wrongly—that his mother was guilty of *murder* also.

34. leave, cf. iii. 2. 147.

wringing must be a *verbal noun*, not a gerund, as it governs the genitive.

37. brassed, *i.e.* hardened.

38. 'Impenetrable defence against *feeling*'.

41. that=as.

45. dicers, *i.e.* gamblers.

46. 'Such a deed as deprives the material contract of marriage of all its essential spirit, and converts an act of pure worship into a mere form of fine words.'

48. glow—with shame.

49. 'The solid compact earth looks as bad as if doomsday were at hand, and loathes the mere thought of the act.'

tristful is a hybrid, *trist* being Latin and *ful* being English; and it is also an anomalous form, as *trist* is already an adjective. Cf. *grateful*.

against, cf. i. 2. 158.

52. Index, *i.e.* preface.

53. Portraits of the two being on the wall.

54. counterfeit presentment, *i.e.* copied representation.

55. Apollon=Apollo

56. front, *i.e.* forehead.

58. station, *i.e.* attitude.

59. new-lighted=newly *a*-lighted.

66. leave, cf. iii. 2. 147.

67. batten, *i.e.* grow fat.

69. hey-day, *i.e.* wild gaiety.

73. apoplexed, *i.e.* paralysed.

74. 'Nor was sense ever so much in bondage to madness that it did not retain some power of discrimination, at all events in a case in which the difference is so very striking.'

77. 'Cheated you at Blind-man's-buff.'

79. sans all, *i.e.* without all the rest.

81. so mope, *i.e.* to be stupid.

83. mutine=mutiny.

88. 'Reason ministers to the wishes of the passions.'

90. grained=ingrained—'dyed in *grain*'.

91. 'Will not loose their stain.'

92. in=into.

94. tithe, *i.e.* tenth part.

95. a vice of kings, *i.e.* a vice among kings: *i.e.* a blustering buffoon. The *Vice* was a stock character in old plays.

96. a cutpurse, *i.e.* a thief.

99. A clown king, or A puppet, made of oddments like a rag doll.

102. From this moment she is practically paralysed with fear.

104. lapsed in time and passion, *i.e.* having misused the time and lost the passion.

111. conceit, *i.e.* imagination.

115. incorporeal=incorporeal—immaterial.

118. 'Your hair, instead of lying flat, starts up like living excrescences and stands on end.'

excrescences has its literal sense (Latin *ex-crescere*, 'to grow out of').

119. an=on, cf. 'a-shore'.

124. capable—of feeling.

126. mystern effects, *i.e.* the things I intend to do sternly.

127. want, *i.e.* lack.

for, *i.e.* instead of.

130. nor...nothing is another instance of the redundant negative.

132. habit, *i.e.* dress.

135. 'Madness is very cunning in erecting these phantoms.'

138. music suggests the full rhythmic beating of a healthy pulse.
140. re-word, *i.e.* repeat word for word.
142. unction, *i.e.* soothing balm.
148. compost, *i.e.* a (mixed) manure.
150. 'When men become gross by luxurious living.'
152. curb, *i.e.* bow.
154. worser is a double comparative, cf. iii. 3. 19.
157. assume has its literal sense of 'take to yourself' (Latin *assumo*).
158. 'Custom is a monster that gradually destroys the original meaning of all actions—a fiend in respect of bad habits which we cannot get rid of, but a blessing in the gradual strengthening (by practice) of good resolves.'
165. Cf. 'custom is second nature'.
168. 'When your conscience leads you to seek Heaven's blessing, then I will ask for your blessing.'
169. for, *i.e.* as for.
170. heaven is probably the dative after *pleased*, and possibly—as elsewhere in Shakespeare—plural, cf. *their* in l. 172.
173. bestow, *i.e.* stow away.
- answer, *i.e.* account for.
180. 'I am really not mad, but very crazy.'
183. paddock, *i.e.* a toad—which was popularly supposed to 'spit poison'.
183. bat—a nocturnal wanderer of evil omen.
- gib, *i.e.* a tom-cat—the third 'familiar' of a witch.
184. concernings=concerns.
187. This seems to be a reference to a story of the imitative powers of an ape, which openly (on the house top) set a cage of birds free, and to try the experiment himself leaped headlong after them.
188. conclusions, *i.e.* a conclusive experiment.
193. must For the omission of the verb of motion, cf. ii. 2. 474.
195. there's letters, cf. iii. 2. 140.
197. 'They have to aid in getting rid of me, and lead me into the knavish plot laid for me.'
199. the sport, *i.e.* the (best) sport. Cf. note on i. 1. 15.
200. holst, a past participle, cf. 'deject'.
- petar=petard—a kind of grenade for bursting open gates.
201. delve is an old word for dig.
203. crafts, *i.e.* cunning plots. Cf. 'When Greek joins Greek, then comes the tug of war'.
204. packing—for my speedy departure, after having killed him.
208. 'To have an end of you—and your long speeches.'

Act IV.—Scene 1.

1. matter, *i.e.* something significant.
- profound, *i.e.* 'deep' (Latin *profundus*), might possibly contain an idea of 'unintelligible', which suggests the word *translate* in the next line.
4. bestow, *i.e.* 'give up', 'retire from'.
11. brainish apprehension, *i.e.* a suggestion of his imagination.
13. had=would have been.
14. full of threats, *i.e.* dangerous.
16. answered, *i.e.* accounted for. Cf. iii. 4. 173.
17. providence has its literal meaning of 'fore-sight' (Latin *pro-vidéo*).
18. 'Should have kept in retirement (from men's haunts) under close restraint.'
22. divulging, *i.e.* being divulged.
25. ore, *i.e.* 'pure ore'.
30. but is frequently used thus (=than) after a 'negative' comparative. Cf. i. 1. 108.
36. fair, *i.e.* gently.
42. blank, *i.e.* 'mark'—literally 'white (blanch) mark'.
43. his=its, cf. *whose* above.
44. woundless, *i.e.* which cannot be wounded. Cf. i. 1. 145 and *sensible* (i. 1. 57), *dreadful* (i. 2. 206), *plausible* (i. 4. 30), *variable* (iv. 3. 24).

Act IV.—Scene 2.

12. demanded of, *i.e.* questioned by.
Cf. note on i. 1. 25.

replication=reply.

15. countenance, *i.e.* favour.

17. like an ape, *i.e.* as an ape keeps nuts.

19. It is but squeezing, *i.e.* he needs only to squeeze.

20. shall, *i.e.* are—in the natural course of things.

22. 'The full meaning of a cunning remark never enters a fool's head.'

26. 'The body (of the responsibility for this) lies with the king, but the king is not with that corpse (as he ought to be).'

29. of nothing, *i.e.* of no value.

hide, etc.,—when the fox is hidden, all set off to find him—*a reference to a game of hide-and-seek.*

Act IV.—Scene 3.

4. loved of. Cf. note on i. 1. 25.

5. 'Who judge by appearances, not by reason.'

6. scourge, *i.e.* punishment.

9. deliberate pause, *i.e.* the result of deliberate arrangement.

10. desperate appliance, *i.e.* application of desperate remedies.

21. politic worms. There is a punning reference to (1) Polonius, the typical 'politician', and (2) the German Imperial 'Diets' held at *Worms*.
e'en, *i.e.* just now.

your worm, cf. note on iii. 2. 3.

24. *is*; *service* seems to be the subject of the sentence; but the *and* has really an 'alternative', not a 'copulative' force, which would quite account for the singular verb.

variable, *i.e.* various. Cf. iv. 1. 44.

30. progress is used ironically—'a royal journey'.

35. nose is another noun used as a verb, cf. i. 1. 98.

40. tender, *i.e.* cherish.

dearly, *i.e.* sorely, cf. i. 2. 181.

43. at help, *i.e.* ready to help, cf. *at ebb*, *at rest*, *at foot*, below.

44. tend, cf. i. 3. 82.

53. at foot, *i.e.* at his heels.

56. also really modifies *everything* in the previous line

leans on, *i.e.* 'depends on'—in the sense of 'affects'.

57. England, cf. note on i. 1. 48.

at aught, *i.e.* at any value, cf. iv. 2. 29.

58. as...thereof, *i.e.* of which.

59. cicatrice, *i.e.* scar.

60. free awe, *i.e.* awe spontaneously shown.

61. set=set aside.

62. process, *i.e.* instructions for procedure.

63. congruing, *i.e.* agreeing.

64. present, *i.e.* immediate.

65. hectic, *i.e.* fever.

67. 'Whatever chances of joy I might have, I should never realize any of them.'

The contrast of the mood of *were* with that of *know* emphasizes the 'remoteness' of the joy and the 'necessity' for the knowledge.

Act IV.—Scene 4.

3. march over, *i.e.* right of way across.

4. rendezvous, *i.e.* meeting place 'to which you are to betake yourself'.

5. if that, cf. note on i. 2. 2.

would aught with, *i.e.* wishes for any (interview) with.

6. 'We shall give expression to our reverence for him to his face.'

9. powers, *i.e.* forces.

15. main, *i.e.* 'mainland' in the sense of 'the whole country'.

20. to pay, *i.e.* if I had to pay.

farm, *i.e.* leave it for farming.

22. **ranker**, *i.e.* richer

In *fee*, *i.e.* if it were sold out and out with all the rights of absolute ownership.

26. **debate** has its literal sense of 'beat down thoroughly' *i.e.* 'decide'.27. **the imposthume** or *abscess*, *i.e.* 'that which undermines'.30. **God be wi' you** has now been contracted into *good-bye*.32. **Inform**, *i.e.* tell.34. **market**, *i.e.* that for which he *exchanges* his time.36. **discourse**, *i.e.* range of reason.39. **fust**, *i.e.* to grow fustily.

40-42. 'Forgetfulness such as you might expect from a beast, or some cowardly and superstitious custom of trying to forecast the issue of one's actions'.

44. **to do**, *i.e.* for future doing.45. **sith** is one contraction, as *since* is another, of *sithounes* 'after that (time)'.46. **gross**, *i.e.* obvious.47. **mass and charge**, *i.e.* size and cost.49. **puff'd**, in a good sense—'inspired'.50. **makes mouths at**, mocks—disregards.**event**, *i.e.* outcome Latin *eventus*.54. **argument**, *i.e.* reason.55. **quarrel**, *i.e.* cause of quarrel.

58. Cf. note on iii. 2. 61.

61. 'Who, for a fancied point of honour'.

fantasy and trick is another instance of heudiadys.

trick here has nothing to do with *trick-trachery*, but is a Celtic word meaning 'ornament', cf. 'to *trick* out'.

63. 'On which there is actually not room for all those to stand face to face in fight who are doomed to die in the wars, still less room to bury them'.

continent, *i.e.* capable of containing the dead.

Act IV.—Scene 5.

2. **distract**, cf. note on iii. 1. 154. This is the second result of Hamlet's delay.3. **needs**, *i.e.* of necessity.5. **there's tricks**, cf. note on iii. 2. 140. iii. 4. 195.6. **spurns enviously**, *i.e.* takes offence suddenly.9. **collection** has its literal sense of 'conclusions' Latin *colligo*, 'I gather'.10. **botch** is simply a doublet of *patch*.15. **ill-breeding**, *i.e.* mischief-making.18. **toy**, *i.e.* trifle.amiss *i.e.* 'disaster'—an adjective used as a noun, cf. note on i. 1. 98.19. **artless jealousy**, *i.e.* ignorant suspicion.20. **spills**, *i.e.* betrays.

25. Pilgrims wore a cockle-shell in their hats to show that they had crossed the sea.

26. **shoon** is an old plural, cf. 'oxen'.36. **larded**, *i.e.* garnished with.37. **bewept**, cf. note on ii. 2. 141.40. 'ild, *i.e.* yield reward'.

A Gloucestershire legend says that a baker's daughter once refused a loaf of bread to Christ, and was changed into an owl. 'To Ophelia even such a transformation was now not incredible'.

43. **conceit**, *i.e.* thought.44. **of this**, *i.e.* about this.47. **betime**=betimes—'by' 'the right' 'time', *i.e.* early.63. **remove** is a verb used as a noun—'removal'.65. **greenly**, *i.e.* foolishly in an un-experienced way.66. **hugger-mugger**, *i.e.* secretly and hastily.

71-76. 'Ruminates on these astonishing events, hides himself and his intentions, listens to tale-bearers who poison his mind with scandal about his father's death, with regard to which, as they necessarily are short of facts, they will not scruple to accuse me to any one who will listen to them.'

77 **murdering-piece**, *i.e.* cannon loaded with case-shot.

The introduction of *cannon* at all is an anachronism, as also the *Swiss guards* are.

78. **superfluous**, *i.e.* imaginary. This suggests that *murdering-piece* might mean 'a play representing a murder'—which would affect his imagination.

79 Swiss guards were employed by monarchs in France, Spain, Italy, and elsewhere, because they could be trusted to have no connection with any local factions.

81 **overpeering of his list**, *i.e.* rising above its boundaries.

If *overpeering* is a verbal noun, it requires a preposition to govern it; if it is a present participle, it cannot govern the genitive case.

83. **head**, *i.e.* a raising of rebellion.

85. **as—as if**.

but to begin, *i.e.* only in its infancy.

87. 'Taking to themselves to ratify and support anything they choose to.'

88. **choose we** is a pure subjunctive—'suppose we chose'.

92. **counter** is a hunting term for hounds 'tracing the scent in the wrong direction'.

93. **broke**, cf. note on i. 7. 45.

101. **fear**=fear for, cf. i. 3. 51.

102. 'A king is surrounded by such a body-guard of heavenly protectors that traitors can only peep through their ranks and get a distant view of the king, who remains beyond the reach of real harm.'

108. 'Ask questions till he is satisfied.'

113. 'I don't care about this life or any future life.'

115 **thoroughly**=thoroughly.

116. 'Nothing in the world except my own will.'

118. **with little**, *i.e.* though they are little.

121. **swoopstake**, *i.e.* with one fell sweep.

125 the **pelican** was supposed to feed its young with its own blood.

126. **repast** is a noun used as a verb—'feed'.

129. **sensibly in grief**, *i.e.* keenly affected.

130. It resumes the noun clause introduced by *that*.

134. **virtue**, *i.e.* power.

140 **fine**, *i.e.* tenderly refused.

141. **instance**, *i.e.* example. 'Ophelia's wits have gone after her father'.

151. 'How well the song goes to the motion of the spinning-wheel'—at which she fancies that she is sitting.

153. This is simply another way of saying what he had just said 147, 148, that 'her want of wits is a more powerful motive to stir him to revenge than such argument would have been'.

154. **rosemary** signifies 'memory'.

155. **there is pansies**, cf. note on iii. 2. 140; iii. 4. 195. The word *pansies* is from the French *pensées*, 'thoughts'. The rosemary (Latin *ros-marinus*, 'sea-spray') and the pansies are for her brother.

158. the **fennel and columbine**—flattery and ingratitude—are for the king.

rue—pity—is for the queen, who is to be pitied 'with a difference', *i.e.* to distinguish her from the rest, and for a different cause.

difference—'pity' to Ophelia, 'repentance to the Queen'.

159. **herb of grace**, because being symbolical of repentance—it was often mixed with the 'holy water'.

161. the **daisy** made the necessary distinction by adding the idea of 'unfaithfulness'.

165 **thought**, *i.e.* grief.

166 **favour**, *i.e.* charm.

167. **a—he**.

177. **of all**, *i.e.* *on* all, cf. note on i. 1. 55.

These are her last words in the drama.

181. 'Choose of your wisest friends whom you will.'

184. **touched**, *i.e.* implicated.

188. **shall**, *i.e.* intend to.

190. **his means of**=the means of his, cf. note on iii. 2. 301.

191. **hatchment** is said to be a corruption of *achievement*—'account of his achievements'.

192. **formal ostentation**, *i.e.* state ceremony.

194. **that**, *i.e.* so that.

Act IV.—Scene 6.

9. **shall** is continually used in this way in the Bible, with reference to God's performance of promise, e.g. 'The zeal of the Lord of Hosts *shall* perform this', i.e. *must* perform, because He has said that He will do it. No one can say what God *will* do.

an=and. The *d* was frequently dropped when the word was used with a subjunctive of 'supposition': + 'the supposition that it may please'.

11. I am let, i.e. I am kindly informed.

14. **means** of access.

17. **compelled**, i.e. to which there was no alternative.

20. **thieves of mercy**, i.e. merciful thieves. (cf. 'a dish of wood', and 'brow of wood' i. 2. 4.)

23. **fly**=flee.

24. **light bore**, i.e. too light for the importance of the matter. The metaphor is from the *levy* of a gun.

Act IV.—Scene 7.

4. 'Since you have heard and know.'

6. **feats**, i.e. deeds. The word is a doublet of *fact*.

7. **crimeful** is a hybrid.

8. **safety**, i.e. desire for safety.

10. **unsinewed**, i.e. weak.

13. **be it either which**, i.e. whichever of the two it may be.

14. **conjunctive**, i.e. bound up with.

16. **by her**, i.e. by her direction.

17. **count**, i.e. account.

might, i.e. could.

18. **general gender**, i.e. common kind of men.

20. There is one of these petrifying springs at Knarlesborough.

21. **gyves**, perhaps 'faults that ought to impede his course'.

22. The best arrows were made of pine, and 'footed' with heavy wood for some six inches from the point to steady them against the wind.

24. **not where**. Supply *gone out of revered*.

26. **terms**, i.e. conditions.

27. **again**—to what she *was*.

28. 'Was conspicuous above all her rivals.'

For the omission of *the* with *mount*, cf. note on i. 3. 66.

30. **sleeps**, cf. i. 1. 173.

32. **shook**, cf. iv. 5. 93.

with, i.e. by.

41. **of him**, cf. note on i. 1. 25.

48. **should**, i.e. can possibly.

49. **abuse**, i.e. trick.

50. **character**, i.e. waiting.

53. **lost in**, i.e. bewildered by.

56. **as**, i.e. as to the question.

59. **so**, i.e. provided that.

61. **checking at** is the term for a hawk leaving the proper game to fly at something else.

that, cf. note on i. 2. 2.

66. **uncharge the practice**, i.e. be unable to make a charge of treachery.

69. **organ**, i.e. instrument.

72. 'The sum total of your other good qualities did not rouse his envy as much as that one quality, which I myself look upon as least worthy of being grasped at.'

75. **seize** may also mean 'seat'—rank.

79. **weeds** means simply 'garments', cf. 'widow's weeds'.

80. **health**, i.e. generally 'prosperity'.

83. **can well**, i.e. have great skill.

86. 'As if he had been made one with his horse in body and in nature.'

87. **topped**, i.e. surpassed.

88. 'That I could not have imagined such feats were possible.'

forge is a doublet of *fabricate*.

91. **brooch**, i.e. the conspicuous jewel.

95. **masterly report**, i.e. report of your masterly skill.

96. **defence**, i.e. knowledge of the art of *defence*.

99. **scrimers**, i.e. fencers (French *escrimen*).

111. **passages of proof**, *i.e.* events within my own experience.

115. **still**, *i.e.* always.

116. 'Goodness, growing to feverish excess, dies of surfeit.'

plurisy, 'excess', comes from Latin *plus*, 'more'; *picuriy*, the disease, comes from the Greek *pleurn* 'side'.

117. **too much** is an adverb used as a noun.

122. **hurts by easing**, *i.e.* injures (his character) while it relieves (his feelings). Instead of *sighing* over his lost fortune, he ought to be 'up and doing'. There may also be a reference to the notion prevalent in Shakespeare's time that every sigh wasted one drop of blood.

126. **sanctuarize**, *i.e.* consider too sacred.

132. **In fine**, *i.e.* finally.

134. **generous**, *i.e.* unsuspecting. **contriving**, *i.e.* plotting.

135. **peruse**, *i.e.* examine carefully — a corruption of *peruse* (Latin *per-video*).

137. **unbated**, *i.e.* without a button — literally 'unblunted'.

pass of practice, *i.e.* a 'treacherous pass', or, 'a pass in which you have specially practised', *c.* 'a pass in friendly exercise-practice'. Cf. l. 66 above and note on iv. 6. 20.

140. **unction**, *i.e.* ointment.

mountebank, *i.e.* a quack doctor who stands ('mounts on a bench'), to sell his wares.

142. **cataplasm**, &c. 'No *poultice* made from all the *herbs* gathered by moonlight that have virtue.' Cf. iii. 2. 226.

146. **contagion** is another instance of the abstract used for the concrete.

that, *i.e.* so that.

149. **shape**, *i.e.* course designed.

150. 'Our object is betrayed by our bad management'.

that, cf. note i. 2. 2.

153. **blast in proof**, *i.e.* collapse in the trial.

154. **cunnings**, cf. note on i. 1. 173.

157. **as is** practically = *and*.

158. **that**, as above.

159. **for the nonce** = *for then once*, *i.e.* 'for that particular occasion', cf. note on iii. 1. 142.

160. **stuck**, *i.e.* 'a thrust in fencing', — Italian, *stocando*.

161. **our purpose** is a change of construction: the subject of the verb ought to be *he*, agreeing with *sipping* in l. 159.

162. This is another result of Hamlet's delay.

grows. For the omission of the relative, cf. l. 18, 117, and 130 above.

167. **hoar**, *i.e.* white on the *under* side.

169. **crowflowers**, *i.e.* 'Ragged Robin'.

purples, *i.e.* 'Lords and Ladies'.

170. **that** is the dative.

liberal, *i.e.* free-spoken.

173. **sliver**, *i.e.* rotten branch.

177. **which time** is an accusative of *duration*.

178. **Incapable** — of understanding. cf. iii. 4. 124.

179. **indued**, *i.e.* endowed with fitting qualities.

181. **till that**. Cf. i. 2. 2.

188. 'When these tears are gone, all womanish thoughts of grief and pity will give place to virile thoughts of revenge.'

190. **of fire**, cf. iv. 6. 20.

191. **but that**, *i.e.* *except* for the fact *that*.

douts, *i.e.* does out — puts out.

Act V.—Scene I.

1. **burial**, *i.e.* burial *place*, cf. l. 24 below.

2. **salvation** is used for its opposite — 'destruction'.

4. **straight**, *i.e.* straight-way — at once.

crowner = coroner — 'an officer ap-

pointed originally to secure to the crown the property of suicides'.

9. **offendendo**. He means 'defendendo' — 'in defending herself'.

10. **wittingly**, *i.e.* intentionally.

12. **argal**. He means *ergo* — 'therefore'.

13. **delver**, *i.e.* digger.
 16. **nill**=ne will, *i.e.* 'will not'.
 21. **quest**=inquest.
 23. **should**, *i.e.* 'would and rightly'.
 25. **sayst**, *i.e.* sayest truly.
 26. **countenance**, *i.e.* 'leave' or 'encouragement'.
 27. **even**, *i.e.* fellow.
 29. **is**. For this singular verb with plural subject, cf. note on iii. 2. 140; iii. 4. 195.
 32. **arms** is a pun on 'armorial bearings' cf. l. 76).
 39. **go to**—'Jericho'.
 40. **what is for who**.
 stronger is an adverb.
 51. **unyoke**, *i.e.* 'go free'—as if he were a beast of burden.
 54. **Mass**, *i.e.* by the mass.
 55. **your**, cf. note on iii. 2. 3.
 58. **Yaughan** seems to be the name of an inn-keeper.
 59. **stoup**, *i.e.* flagon.
 60. These stanzas are from an old song by Lord Vaux, which was published a few years before Shakespeare was born. The clown sings his own—nonsensical—version of them; and the *o's* and *a's* represent grunts after the strokes of his maddock.
 64. **of his**, *i.e.* for his.
 66. **a property of easiness**, *i.e.* 'naturally easy'. Cf. note on i. 2. 4.
 72. **such**, *i.e.* young.
 74. **jowls**, *i.e.* knocks.
 76. **politician**, *i.e.* 'schemer', as always in Shakespeare. In Elizabeth's time politics was essentially 'state-craft'—plotting and counter-plotting.
 84. **chapless**, *i.e.* 'without cheeks'—simply 'a skeleton'.
 85. **mazzard**, *i.e.* jaw—French *ma-choire*.
 86. **an**, cf. note on iv. 6. 9.
 trick, *i.e.* skill.
 87. 'Cost no more *in* the breeding than what makes them fit only for men to play at bowls with them.'
 loggate is the diminutive of *log*.
 94. **quiddities**, *i.e.* subtleties.
 quillies, *i.e.* quibbles.
 95. **tenures**, *i.e.* terms on which land is held (Latin *teneo* 'I hold').
 96. **sconce**, *i.e.* 'skull'—literally 'a head-piece' (of armour).
 97. **of battery**, *i.e.* for being beaten (unlawfully)—a legal term.
 98. **might be** for 'may have been'.
 99. **recognizances** are 'bonds acknowledging money lent on land'.
 vouchers are the 'written promises to pay'.
 100. **fine**, *i.e.* end (Latin *finis*). Fines are payments at the end of a lawsuit.
 103. **indentures** were made out in duplicate, each party to the contract keeping one copy; and the *indenture* was literally the perforated line by which the whole parchment was torn into two pieces. These lines were 'indented' (Latin *dens* 'a tooth') differently for every new 'indenture', in order that the genuineness of each might be proved by the two pieces 'tallying' exactly.
 104. **conveyances** are 'deeds which convey the right to land'.
 box is a pun—'coffin' and 'strong-box'.
 105. **inheritor**, *i.e.* the owner (of that land).
 106. **Jot** is a doublet of *jota*, the name of the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet.
 109. **assurance**, *i.e.* 'perfect security' for the conveyance of land.
 115. **hest**—a pun.
 119. **quick**, *i.e.* living.
 129. **absolute**, *i.e.* positive and precise.
 130. **by the card**=by the compass-card, *i.e.* exactly to the point.
 131. **this** is singular because *three-years* is regarded as one period of time.
 132. 'That the peasant runs the courtier so hard in the imitation of his *picked* phrases that the rivalry is positively galling.'
 133. **kibe** is 'a chilblain on the heel'.
 139. This would make Hamlet 30 years old, cf. 4. 153.
 151. **ground**, cf. 'Puns' in Classified Index.
 156. **last you**. This is another instance of the *ethic dative*, cf. note on ii. 1. 7.
 year. For this neuter plural, cf. note on iii. 2. 256.
 167. **Rhenish**, *i.e.* Rhine wine—*hock*.

171. *it, i.e.* what remains of him.
 176. *gibes, i.e.* jests.
 178. *on=*in.
 179. *chap-fallen*, cf. l. 84 above.
 my lady, i.e. any fine lady.
 180. *favour, i.e.* appearance.
 184. *Alexander* was "The Great" king of Macedon, who conquered Persia and India.
 191. *he*, as if *imagination* were a man, cf. i. 2. 104.
 192. *too curiously, i.e.* with too much care
 199. *Imperious=*imperial.
 202. *flaw, i.e.* gust of wind (Latin *flare*) 'to blow'.
 205. *maimed, i.e.* 'defective'—'partial', because, as Ophelia had committed suicide, some ceremonies were omitted, cf. l. 1 above.
 207. *fordo=*undo. Cf. ii. 1. 102.
 it for its, cf. i. 2. 215.
 estate, i.e. rank.
 208. *couch me, i.e.* let me crouch down.
 213. *warranty=*warrant.
 214. *but that, i.e.* except for the fact that.
 'The King's command overrules the ordinary regulations of the church.'
 215. *should, i.e.* would and ought to have been.
 217. *shards=*shreds—'potsherds'.
 218. *crants, i.e.* 'garlands'—as becoming a young and unmarried woman
 219. *strewments, i.e.* the strewing of flowers. *Strewment* is a hybrid.
 home, i.e. 'her last long home'.
 223. *to sing, i.e.* by singing.
 a requiem is a funeral hymn praying for the rest (Latin *requies*) of the soul.
 224. *peace-parted, i.e.* 'departed this life in peace', cf. 'thought-sick', iii. 4. 51.

226. *violets*, cf. iv. 5. 161.
 232. *have* is the pure infinitive—without *to*. Cf. note on i. 2. 142; iii. 1. 166.
 234. *Ingenious sense, i.e.* reason.
 240. *Olympus* is a snow-capped mountain of Greece, whose summit, high in the sky, was the fabled abode of the gods, and was often spoken of as the blue vault of heaven itself. *Pelion* is a high mountain in Thessaly; the giants are said, in their war against the gods, to have heaped Pelion on the sides of Olympus, and Ossa upon Pelion, to enable them to cope with the gods on Olympus.
 what, cf. note on l. 40 above
 241. *phrase of sorrow*, 'who in the expression of his grief, *adjures* the planets'.
 247. *splénitive, i.e.* 'passionate', for the spleen was supposed to be the seat of anger.
 261. *forbear*, cf. ii. 1. 102.
 262. 'S wounds', cf. note on i. 1. 16 ii. 2. 347.
 263. *Woo't=*would'st thou.
 264. *eisel, i.e.* vinegar.
 266. *outface, i.e.* put me out of countenance.
 267. *quick, i.e.* alive.
 271. *Ossa*, cf. note on l. 40 above.
 an thou'lt mouth, i.e. if thou wilt boast (about thy love for her).
 275. 'When her pair of young are hatched, covered with yellow down.'
 when that, cf. note on i. 2. 2.
 276. 'He will sit drooping in silence.'
 280. 'Nature will show itself in spite of Herculean efforts to prevent it.'
 282. *In, i.e.* in the thought of.
 283. *the present push, i.e.* an instant trial.
 285. *living* has a double sense, (1) *life-like*, in which sense the Queen takes it, and (2) *in Hamlet's life*, in which sense the King intends Laertes to take it.

Act V.—Scene 2.

6. *mutines=*mutineers. In iii. 4. 83 the word is used as a verb.
bilboes, i.e. 'iron (stocks)'—used on board ship. The name comes

from *Bilbao*, which has been famous for its iron ever since the Roman conquest of Spain. Cf. note on ii. 2. 164.

7. know, *i.e.* knowledge.

9. pall, *i.e.* fail. The word has no connection with *pall*=Latin *falla*, 'a mantle'.

learn is causative--'make us learn' = 'teach us'. Cf. *toils*, i. 1. 72.

10, 11. The metaphor here is from *sculpture*. Common workmen 'rough-hew' the mass of stone into the general shape required, but far higher skill is necessary to 'finish' the work—to 'shape the ends'.

13. scarf'd, *i.e.* thrown on—without using the sleeves. *Scarfs*, as *finger* in l. 15, is originally a noun.

17. forgetting *i.e.* causing me to forget, cf. l. 9 above.

to unseal, *i.e.* as to unseal.

20. larded, cf. iv 3. 36.

21. Importing, *i.e.* referring to.

22. 'With bug-bears and other objects of fear as long as I lived.'

23. supervise, *i.e.* 'looking over'—a verb used as a noun.

bated, *i.e.* allowed.

24. to stay, *i.e.* by waiting for. For the intransitive verb used transitively, cf. note on l. 1. 27. 72.

27. hear me how. Such a redundant object was common where the dependent clause was really an explanation of the direct object. cf. 'I know Thee—who Thou art'. Here the dependent clause is a sort of cognate accusative.

30. or, *i.e.* ere. *Or*, the alternative conjunction, is a corruption of *other* (wise).

'Before I could make up my mind to any definite cause of action, I found myself acting on impulse.'

31. they, *i.e.* my brains.

sat is used transitively.

32. fair=fairly, *i.e.* well

33. statists, *i.e.* statesmen.

36. yeoman's, *i.e.* such as the small tenant-farmers rendered to their lords in time of war.

37. effect, *i.e.* import.

42. 'And stand as a connection and a bond of friendship between them.'

43. As'es of great charge, *i.e.* (1) reasons of great 'weight', (2) asses heavily burdened.

45. debatement, *i.e.* discussion.

47. shriving-time, *i.e.* time for shrift (confession).

N.B.—This adjectival use of the gerund must be carefully distinguished from the present participle.

'A walking stick' is not 'a stick that walks'.

48. ordinant—'ordering'—is a participle formed on the French model, as often in heraldry, *e.g.* couchant, rampant.

52. subscribed, *i.e.* signed at the foot.

53. changeling, cf. note on iii. 2. 10.

54. was sequent, *i.e.* followed.

56. to 't. It=death.

58. near, *i.e.* heavy upon.

'Their death is the result of their own cunning interference.'

61. 'Between the swords of mighty opponents who are greatly incensed against one another.'

pass, *i.e.* a thrust with a sword.

62. opposites=opponents.

63. thinks thee, *i.e.* it seems to thee, cf. note on iii. 2. 202.

stand upon, *i.e.* devolve upon.

65. 'Stepped in and seized the throne to which I hoped to be elected.'

66. angle, *i.e.* 'bait'—another instance of a verb used as a noun, cf. l. 23 above.

proper, *i.e.* own.

67. cozenage is—and literally here—the cheating of a cousin.

Is't not, etc., *i.e.* is it not a thing to be done with a perfectly blameless conscience.

68. quit, *i.e.* requite.

70. In=into.

73. short=shortly.

Interim, *i.e.* the meantime.

77. 'I can sympathize with his case—because it is the same as my own; we both have lost a father.'

79. bravery, *i.e.* display.

82. water-fly, *i.e.* busy trifler.

85. 'If a base fellow is only supremely base, he will find a place at the king's table: he is a jackdaw, but he owns an immense amount of land.'

92. his=its.

95. Indifferent, *i.e.* rather.

103. for mine ease, cf. l. 92, 93 above.

104. is come, cf. note on i. 1. 5.

105. differences, *i.e.* 'distinctions'—

- that make him different to other men. The words are almost equal to 'different excellences'.
105. *soft*, *i.e.* gentle.
106. *showing*, *i.e.* appearance.
107. 'He is the guide *compass*-card, cf. v. 1. 130, and director of good manners, for he contains the sum-total of all the good qualities ('parts') that a gentleman would like to show.'
109. *his* *definement*, *i.e.* your definition of him—a subjective genitive used for an objective.
- perdition*, *i.e.* loss.
- N.B. Hamlet answers Osric in his own affected manner.
110. 'To go into particulars about him, as if one were drawing up an inventory, would only turn one's head dizzy; and after all one could make *nothing* but slow and unsteady progress in trying to trace his rapid evolutions. But, to speak seriously and truly in praise of him, I do take him to be a combination of great qualities; and his *essential* virtues are so rare that, to tell the truth, the only thing like him is his image in a mirror, and all those who would imitate him, are merely his shadows.'
111. *yaw* is a nautical term for a vessel refusing to obey the helm
but.. *neither*=nothing but.
113. *article*, *i.e.* combination. (Latin *articulus* 'a little joint'.)
infusion, *i.e.* essence.
115. *who*=*he* *who*.
umbrage is from Latin *umbra* 'a shadow'.
118. *concernancy*, *i.e.* object.
119. *more rawer*. *i.e.* more unexperienced. For the double comparative, cf. note on ii. 1. 11.
122. 'You will understand if you try.'
123. 'Why has this gentleman been named?'
130. *approve*, *i.e.* do credit to.
132. *compare with*, *i.e.* dare to rival.
135. 'But in the reputation won for him by his weapons he stands alone in merit.'
141. *the* *which*. The use of *the* in this manner emphasizes the antecedent—'those six horses'.
Imponed, *i.e.* put in (pledge).
142. *assigns*, *i.e.* belongings.
143. *carriages*, *i.e.* the girdles and hangers by which the weapons were carried.
144. *very responsive*, *i.e.* a very good match.
145. *liberal conceit*, *i.e.* fanciful design.
147. 'I knew you would need some *marginal* explanations.'
margent. The final *t* is intrusive. like the *d* in *swound*, l. 291 below.
150. *germane*, *i.e.* relevant.
163. *breathing time*, *i.e.* time for exercise.
165. *will gain*, *i.e.* am willing (to) get besides defeat!.
167. *redeliver you*, *i.e.* take back an answer from you.
168. *after what flourish*, *i.e.* with such flourishes of language as.
172. *for's turn*, *i.e.* that will serve his turn.
173. 'He is very young—only just born.'
175. *comply with his dug*, *i.e.* pay compliments to his (mother's) breast.
176. *drossy age*, *i.e.* age when the scum rises to the top.
'He has caught the general manner of the age and its social etiquette, a kind of frothy superficiality which enables them to give out the most foolish and worthless (as chaff) opinions.'
180. *bubbles* introduces a different metaphor.
181. *him*=himself. 'Sent you his compliments.'
184. *that*=if that, cf. note on i. 2. 2.
186. *fitness*, *i.e.* convenience.
187. *whensoever*—he pleases.
190. *entertainment*, *i.e.* conversation.
191. *fall to*, *i.e.* begin.
196. *wouldst not*=*unless* I told thee.
199. *gain-giving*, *i.e.* misgiving. The *gain* has nothing to do with *gain* 'profit', but is a corruption of *against*, cf. *gainsey*.
202. *repair* = 'repairing' — another verb used as a noun.
204. Cf. *S. Matthew* x. 29.
205. *to come*, *i.e.* yet to come—in the future.
206. *all*, *i.e.* all that is necessary.

207. 'As no man takes away with him any of his earthly possessions, where is the hardship in leaving the earth early?'
211. **this presence**, *i.e.* 'the people present'—the abstract for concrete.
214. **exception**, *i.e.* objection.
223. **audience**, *cf.* *presence* above.
224. **purposed**, *i.e.* intentional.
226. 'I have *accidentally* done an injury to one whom I love as a brother.'
227. **in nature**, *i.e.* so far as my natural feelings of resentment are concerned.
228. **whose motive**, *i.e.* the sting of which.
229. **in my terms of honour**, *i.e.* so far as my conventional ideas of 'honour' are concerned.
230. **will**, *i.e.* wish for.
232. 'I have an opinion that precedents will justify me in making peace without being dishonoured.'
240. **stick fiery off**, *i.e.* stand out brilliantly.
248. **me** is dative, *cf.* ii. 2. 80.
as one, *i.e.* the same.
252. '(Or pay him out in returning his third thrust.'
255. **union**, *i.e.* *one* (large *pearl*: [*Latin unus* 'one']).
258. **kettle**. *Kettle-drum*.
267. **bout**, *i.e.* 'round'—from the root of *bow* to 'bend'.
270. **fat**. This is said to be a hit at a certain Richard Burbage, who played the part of Hamlet in Shakespeare's own times.
271. **napkin**, *i.e.* handkerchief.
281. **pass**, *i.e.* thrust.
282. **wanton**, *i.e.* 'a plaything'—literally 'one untaught'.
289. *cf.* iii 4. 202.
207. **swounds**=swoons, *cf.* l. 147 above.
300. **unbated**, *cf.* iv. 7. 137.
309. *cf.* l. 256 above.
311. **tempered**, *i.e.* mixed.
319. **sergeant** is a special form of the word *servant* applied to certain 'officers' of the crown.
323. **it**, *i.e.* that I *live*.
328. **shall**, *i.e.* will have to (if you are dead).
330. 'Deny *thyself* the happiness of death.'
336. **o'er-crows**, *i.e.* overcomes.
341. 'And tell him at the same time all that has occurred to prompt my choice.'
343. **flights**=literally 'a *troop* of winged creatures'.
347. **quarry** is connected with Latin *cor* 'the heart' (because the *heart* and entrails of hunted animals were given to the dogs); and has nothing to do with *quarry*=Latin *quadrare*, 'to cut square'.
cries on means either (1) cries out against, or (2) calls for.
 (1) 'These dead bodies cry out against, further carnage.'
 (2) 'These dead bodies call for vengeance.'
- toward**, *i.e.* going on.
358. **jump**, *cf.* note on i. 1. 65.
364. **carnal**, *i.e.* sinful.
369. **put on**, *i.e.* instigated.
375. **draw on more**, *i.e.* will be seconded by others.
378. **on**, *i.e.* in consequence of.
380. **put on**, *i.e.* (1) put on—the throne, or (2) put to—the test.
381. **royally**, *i.e.* like a king.
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FAMILIAR AND PROVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS.

Act I.

1. 7. For this relief much thanks.
 1. 75. whose sore task
 Does not divide the Sunday from the week.
 1. 112. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
 1. 148. it started like a guilty thing
 Upon a fearful summons.
 2. 65. A little more than kin, and less than kind.
 2. 72. all that lives must die,
 Passing through nature to eternity.
 2. 86. the trappings and the suits of woe.
 2. 129. O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt.
 2. 137. That it should come to this!
 2. 140. Hyperion to a satyr.
 2. 146. Frailty, thy name is woman.
 2. 180. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked-meats
 Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
 2. 185. In my mind's eye.
 2. 187. He was a man, take him for all in all,
 I shall not look upon his like again.
 2. 232. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.
 2. 250. Give it an understanding, but no tongue.
 2. 257. foul deeds will rise,
 Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.
 3. 6. a toy in blood.
 3. 19. He may not, as unvalued persons do,
 Carve for himself.
 3. 38. Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes.
 3. 43. best safety lies in fear.
 3. 48. the steep and thorny way to heaven.
 3. 50. the primrose path of dalliance.
 3. 59-80. give thy thoughts no tongue
 Thou canst not then be false to any man.
 3. 115. springs to catch woodcocks.
 4. 14. But to my mind, though I am native here
 And to the inanner born, it is a custom
 More honour'd in the breach than the observance.
 4. 24. some vicious mole of nature.
 4. 32. nature's livery or fortune's star.
 4. 36. the dram of eale
 Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
 To his own scandal.
 4. 39. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

- 4 53. Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous.
- ✓ 4 65. I do not set my life at a pin's fee.
- 4 85. By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!
- 4 90. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
- 5 15. I could a tale unfold.
- 5 19. each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine.
- 5 60. Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unaneled,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.
- 5 68. leave her to heaven
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge.
- 5 89. meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain.
- 5 107. There needs no ghost—come from the grave
To tell us this.
- 5 112. every man has business and desire,
Such as it is.
- 5 147. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
- 5 148. There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
- 5 171. The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to put it right!

Act II.

- 1 62. Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth.
- 1 66. By indirections find directions out.
- 1 97. He seemed to find his way without his eyes.
- ✓ 1 101. This is the very ecstasy of love.
- 2 90. brevity is the soul of wit.
- 2 95. More matter with less art.
- 2 97. That he is mad, 't is true: 't is true 't is pity;
And pity 't is 't is true.
- 2 111. That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; 'beautified' is a vile
phrase.
- 2 157. Take this from this, if this be otherwise.
- 2 186. Still harping on my daughter.
- 2 203. Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't.
- 2 241. for there is nothing either good or bad,
but thinking makes it so.
- 2 263. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks.
- 2 282-6. What a piece of work is man! . . .
. . . the paragon of animals!
- 2 358. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is
southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

2. 414. 't was caviare to the general.
 2. 498. they (the actors) are the abstract
 and brief chronicles of the time.
 2. 503. use every man
 after his desert, and who shall scape whipping?
 2. 530. What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?
 2. 572. the devil hath power
 To assume a pleasing shape.

Act III.

1. 47. with devotion's visage
 And pious action we do sugar o'er
 The devil himself.
 1. 56-88. To be or not to be . . .
 And lose the name of action.
 ✓ 1. 101. Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
 1. 147-158. O, what a noble mind . . .
 . . . see what I see!
 2. 3-12. Nor do not saw the air . . .
 . . . it outherods Herod.
 2. 16-20. Suit the action to the word . . .
 . . . mirror up to nature.
 ✓ 2. 48. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
 As e'er my conversation coped withal.
 2. 56. thrift may follow fawning.
 2. 57-67. Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice .
 . . . in my heart of heart.
 2. 112. there's hope a great man's memory
 may outlive his life half a year.
 2. 126. 'Tis brief, my lord.
 As woman's love.
 2. 203. The lady doth protest too much.
 2. 214. let the galled jade wince,
 • Our withers are unwrung.
 2. 244. my fortunes turn Turk with me.
 2. 321. 'Tis as easy as lying.
 2. 345. Very like a whale.
 2. 350. 'Tis now the very witching time of night,
 When churchyards yawn.
 2. 358. I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
 3. 25. we will fetters put upon this fear,
 Which now goes too free-footed.
 3. 32. nature makes them (mothers) partial.
 3. 36. O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
 It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
 A brother's murder.
 3. 58. Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice.

3. 73. Now might I do it pat.
 3. 81. With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May.
 3. 90. some act
 That has no relish of salvation in't.
 3. 97. Words without thoughts never to heaven go.
 4. 19. a glass
 Where you may see the inmost part of you.
 4. 33. to be too busy is some danger.
 4. 45. As false as dicers' oaths.
 4. 53. Look here, upon this picture, and on this.
 4. 54. The counterfeit presentment.
 4. 99. A king of shreds and patches.
 4. 134. This is the very coinage of your brain.
 4. 142. Lay not that flattering unction to your soul.
 4. 157. Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
 4. 175. I must be cruel, only to be kind.
 4. 201. 't is the sport to have the engineer
 Hoist with his own petar.

Act IV.

2. 22. ✓ a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.
 3. 9. diseases desperate grown
 By desperate appliance are relieved.
 3. 21. Your worm is your only emperor for diet.
 4. 32. How all occasions do inform against me,
 And spur my dull revenge!
 4. 33. What is a man,
 If his chief good and market of his time
 Be but to sleep and feed?
 4. 40. some craven scruple
 Of thinking too precisely on the event.
 4. 53. Rightly to be great
 Is not to stir without great argument,
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
 When honour's at the stake.
 5. 6. Spurns enviously at straws.
 ✓ 5. 20. It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.
 ✓ 5. 41. We know what we are, but know not
 What we may be.
 ✓ 5. 60. When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
 But in battalions.
 ✓ 5. 102. There's such divinity doth hedge a king
 That treason can but peep to what it would.
 5. 138. is't possible, a young maid's wits
 Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
 5. 155. there is pansies, that's for thoughts.
 7. 77. A very riband in the cap of youth.
 7. 107. A face without a heart.

7. 117. that we would do
We should do when we would.
7. 143. all simples that have virtue
Under the moon.
7. 163. One woe doth tread upon another's heel.
7. 188. when these (tears) are gone,
The woman will be out.
- Act V.**
1. 55. Cudgel the brains no more about it.
1. 64. Has this fellow no feeling of his business?
1. 66. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.
1. 76. A politician—one that would circumvent God.
1. 174. a fellow of infinite jest.
1. 191. To what base uses we may return.
1. 201. Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
1. 221. the bringing home
Of bell and burial.
1. 231. Sweets to the sweet.
1. 282. The cat will mew and dog will have his day.
2. 10. There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.
2. 36. It did me yeoman's service.
2. 73. It will be short: the interim is mine.
2. 92. Put your bonnet to his right use.
2. 163. it is the breathing time of day with me.
2. 174. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.
2. 197. how ill all's here about my heart.
2. 204. 8. There's a special providence . . .
to leave betimes?
2. 264. A hit, a very palpable hit.
2. 320. this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest.
2. 323. Report me and my cause aright.
2. 325. I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
2. 342. The rest is silence.

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